

Wendy Scase

‘Piers Plowman’
and the
New Anti-
clericalism

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Piers Plowman and the New Anticlericalism

The medieval English poem *Piers Plowman* is noted for its attacks on the clergy. The later fourteenth century, when the poem was written, is often thought of as an anticlerical age. Yet this is the first book on fourteenth-century English anticlericalism, and the first extended investigation of the anticlericalism of the poem.

Dr Scase challenges the usual assumption that long-established anticlerical traditions continued unchanged in the conflicts of this period. She describes and analyses important but little-known medieval polemics and satires (many of them only available in manuscript), tracing the emergence of a distinctive 'new anticlericalism' which entailed nothing less than the making of a new anticlerical literature. With the writing of *Piers Plowman*, she argues, this literary challenge was accepted. Always referring closely to the contemporary controversies, and with constant attention to the detail of the text, she reveals the significance of the poem's anticlericalism. Informative and rigorously argued, this book is intended to convince literary critics and historians alike.

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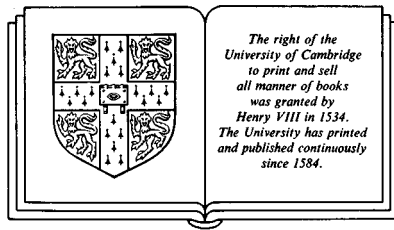
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Piers Plowman and the New Anticlericalism

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For Roger

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Preface

This book is a study of the anticlericalism of *Piers Plowman*. The approach is historical and contextual. As a basis for my account, I have studied anticlericalism contemporary with the poem, exploring the many sides of that opposition to the clergy: its satire, polemic, theory, language and politics. I have studied the defences and apologies put forward by the clerics, and the traditions drawn upon by both sides. In the pages which follow, I argue that we have in this period a transformation of tradition: a 'new anticlericalism'. I have charted the emergence of the new anticlericalism in the bouts of the conflict with the clerics. This book is about the part played by *Piers Plowman* in that drama.

The perspective and treatment of the subject here are very different from those of previous studies in the field. Previous work on the opposition to the clergy in this period has considered attacks on clerics of different kinds as examples of disparate anticlerical 'traditions', for example, as traditional antifraternalism, or antimonasticism, or antipapalism. Later fourteenth-century examples of satire and polemic have been considered in relation to earlier writings, as continuations of traditions found there. Writings from the later period of anticlericalism have not been considered in their contemporary context; most importantly, they have not been considered in relation to one another. Thus it has been thought that the various anticlerical traditions of the past continued, unchanged, in what I have called the *Piers Plowman* period (the period during which the poem was composed), and in *Piers Plowman*. This is the thesis, for example, of P. R. Szittyá's book, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, which includes a chapter on *Piers Plowman*. The contextual examination of anticlerical traditions has led me to propose a very different view in this book. I have described discontinuities with the past, transformations of the old anticlerical traditions and the emergence from their disparateness of an anticlericalism with implications for all clerics: the new anticlericalism.

I have chosen the epithet 'new' to characterise this anticlericalism in order to stress the innovatory character which distinguishes it from the older traditions. The older traditions were 'anticlerical' in the sense that they had as their targets specific classes of cleric. Anticlericalism in the poem and in the period has, however, been misinterpreted when seen simply as a continuation of these disparate traditions. It was the distinctive innovation of the 'new

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anticlericalism' to refound the old traditions on a new basis, and thus to find and release the potential of the old traditions to be 'anticlerical' in the fullest sense. The old traditions of opposition to clerics were developed and unified in a new polemic which opposed all clerics. This was the essential strength and danger of the new anticlericalism.¹

The full history of the opposition to the clergy in this period has never been written, while knowledge of even the individual conflicts, polemicists and polemics is scarce and patchy. This is undoubtedly one reason why anticlericalism in the period has been considered simply 'traditional'. There are many sources for a history – polemical sermons, records of university disputations, treatises on theoretical issues, official pronouncements, legal documents from litigation, letters, narratives – but very little is known about most of this material, and hardly any of it has been edited. The student has to begin where the controversialists left off: with Latin manuscripts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, or sometimes with sixteenth- or seventeenth-century printings. With this state of affairs, it is, of course, impossible to write anything other than a preliminary and selective study, and in any case, an exhaustive history would not be appropriate for the purposes of this book. Equally, it would be quite impossible to study the anticlericalism of *Piers Plowman* contextually, without beginning with these sources.

I have used only sparingly the writings of Wyclif's followers, the Lollards or Wycliffites, as sources for anticlericalism. For the most part, they appear to have been written slightly later than *Piers Plowman*, if we take Dr Hudson's dates of 1384–1414 for the Wycliffite writings and the usually accepted dates of 1377–9, and mid 1380s for the composition of the B and C versions of *Piers Plowman*.² Moreover, an assessment of their value as sources is complicated by the probability of their debt to the poem. The question of the relationship between Wycliffite anticlericalism and that of the poem is an important one, but it is a question which requires a separate study. In view of the complexity and obscurity of anticlericalism as a whole in the period, it has seemed better initially to take a broader view.

This discussion of sources should have made it clear that much of this book is concerned with writings not previously considered to have much importance for the history of Middle English literature. Yet the implications of the new anticlericalism were, as I shall show, literary as well as political, historical and theological. These literary implications were, also, more far-reaching and profound than might be supposed. Traditions of satire and polemic are the reflexes of anticlericalism most often noticed in Middle English literature. The new anticlericalism, I shall argue, generated transformations and adaptations of these traditions. But I shall show that, in addition, changes in the basis for anticlericalism had implications for vocabulary, for practices and principles of literary interpretation, for literary authority, for translation and for the writer's choice between Latin and English.

There are good reasons for beginning the study of these implications with a book on the anticlericalism of *Piers Plowman*. Literary history suggests that

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Piers Plowman was one of the first, and certainly one of the most influential, Middle English texts in which the challenges of the new anticlericalism were confronted, and its opportunities exploited. This is indicated by the nature of the early reception and influence of the poem. The poem's manuscripts give much evidence of the intense interest of early readers in anticlericalism, for example through medieval annotations of the text. The writings of the '*Piers Plowman* tradition', described by, among others, D. A. Lawton and J. N. King, suggest that anticlerical Wycliffite and Protestant reformers looked to the poem as a source of a viable way of writing in English about matters of church and state. In more modern times, the anticlericalism of the poem has often been remarked – indeed, it greatly excited fervent Victorian opponents of Roman Catholicism, such as the early editor Thomas Wright – yet, like the anticlericalism of the period generally, it has always been considered 'traditional' by modern scholars and critics, and therefore not to require detailed analysis. It has never before been the subject of a book.

If the drama of the poem's anticlericalism is acted at the interfaces between text and context, then one important locus of this drama is the manuscript, or textual, interface. By this I mean that the various shapes, or 'versions', of the poem provide contexts for one another, that every collection of variant readings is a 'context' for a 'text', and, in a rather different way, that medieval marginal annotation in the manuscripts is a context. This is the principle which has guided my approach to a problem which besets all studies of *Piers Plowman*: the problem of establishing the authorial text.

There has been much debate over whether it is possible, in practice or even in principle, for editors to recover an authorial text, or texts, of *Piers Plowman*. Many critical studies, however, have been founded exclusively on editions of the poem. While modern editions are undeniably necessary if the poem is to continue to be read and studied, critical studies based wholly on one or more of these are founded on texts whose authority must be open to question. Even if scholars could be confident that editors had recovered the authorial versions of the poem, it would still be questionable whether they should in every case disregard the state of the poem in its manuscripts. For even if editors have recovered what the poet wrote, it is perfectly clear that they have not recovered what any medieval reader could have read. Kane's conclusion that the B-text must have been based on a corrupt A-text manuscript, and the demonstration by Kane and Donaldson that the C-text revision was based on a corrupt B-text suggest that an 'authorial text' was not even available to the poet. Indeed, studies based wholly on one or two modern editions exclude a mass of evidence for the poem's medieval history. In other areas of Middle English studies manuscript evidence has been exploited for critical purposes, for example in Windeatt's work on scribal variants and marginalia in *Troilus* manuscripts ('The Scribes as Chaucer's Early Critics'), but the mass of data in the *Piers Plowman* manuscripts, arguably more important both quantitatively and qualitatively, has for the most part been used only for editorial purposes. The large amount of medieval marginal annotation in the

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Piers Plowman manuscripts has been ignored, or perhaps not even suspected, by most of the poem's critics. Russell's article, 'Some Early Responses to the C-Version of *Piers Plowman*', is the main contribution on the subject. Textual variants have never been used as evidence throughout a study, although their potential value for critical studies was noted by Hudson in her paper 'Middle English'.

The importance of textual variation for critical studies of the poem no doubt varies according to the kind of study undertaken. Textual variation has been considered extensively in this book, because the variants are often crucial, and as such the variation itself can be considered to have been generated by anticlerical controversy. As I shall show, anticlerical conflict was often a linguistic conflict. Choices of vocabulary, and even sentence structure, were significant. During the course of the debates, linguistic strategies shifted and changed. Substantial variation in the manuscripts is therefore both crucial and to be associated with the drama of the debates themselves. It is, from this point of view, the primary interface between text and context, and the place where it is hardest to decide which is which.

Some of the manuscript evidence is published in the editions of the poem, but for some it is necessary to consult the manuscripts themselves. The absence of a full critical edition of the C-text means that the full corpus of C-text variants has not been available for study. I have consulted the C-text manuscripts for certain crucial readings, otherwise I have relied on the limited amount of information recorded in W. W. Skeat, *The Vision of William Concerning Piers the Plowman in Three Parallel Texts* (1886; rev. ed. London, 1969), and Derek Pearsall, *Piers Plowman: An Edition of the C-text* (London, 1978). It is to be expected that, when all the C-text variants are published, the extra data will make it possible to add more detail, but will not alter the outlines of the picture drawn here, since variation illustrates and confirms the arguments concerning the linguistic conflicts. The large amount of medieval marginal annotation in *Piers Plowman* manuscripts has never been systematically recorded. For this, again, I have turned to the manuscripts themselves.

When textual variation is associated with controversial language, the editorial problems posed by the poem are even more formidable than usual. It would be especially difficult to claim with confidence for each and every crux of this kind that an authorial text and authorial revisions could be distinguished from a mass of crucial variants, and such an endeavour would occupy a great deal of space. Therefore I have treated crucial variants equally, without attempting to distinguish authorial text, authorial revision and scribal intervention from one another. For this reason, I have written throughout of the poem *Piers Plowman*, rather than of the author Langland. In this I have followed the practice of the medieval readers who referred, as the early wills show, to a book called *Piers Plowman*.

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Wendy Scase

Note on quotations and references

When quoting from manuscripts I have silently expanded abbreviations, and added modern punctuation and capitalisation. With the few, brief, quotations of manuscript material in English, expansions supplied do not necessarily reflect the spelling practices of the scribe, since, as will be clear, the nature of this material (mostly marginalia) makes this impractical, if not impossible, to achieve. Unless otherwise indicated, all references to and quotations from *Piers Plowman* in the text and notes are from the following editions: A-text: ed. George Kane, *Piers Plowman: The A Version, Will's Visions of Piers Plowman and Do-well* (rev. ed., London and Berkeley, California, 1988); B-text: eds. George Kane and E. Talbot Donaldson, *Piers Plowman: The B Version, Will's Visions of Piers Plowman, Do-well, Do-better and Do-best* (rev. ed., London and Berkeley, California, 1988); C-text: ed. Derek Pearsall, *Piers Plowman: An Edition of the C-text* (London, 1978); the *Piers Plowman* in MS Bodley 851 (MS [Z]): eds. A. G. Rigg and Charlotte Brewer, *Piers Plowman: the Z Version* (Toronto, 1983). I have quoted the Bible in English from *The New English Bible with the Apocrypha* (Oxford and Cambridge, 1970). When supplying translations of Latin quotations, it has often seemed more helpful to translate 'sense for sense' than 'word for word'.

In references to *Piers Plowman* textual variants derived from editions, the manuscript *sigla* used in the editions have been employed, but the name of the manuscript is given in full in references to the variants and other material which I have gathered from the manuscripts themselves. I have adopted this practice in order to make the sources of my information clear. Only those manuscripts cited directly are included in the Bibliography. For a convenient (but slightly inaccurate) list of *Piers Plowman* manuscripts and *sigla* see DiMarco, *Piers Plowman: a Reference Guide* (Boston, Mass., 1982), pp. xix–xxiii, noting that C-text [P] is Huntington Library MS HM 137 (not 114) and adding the Holloway Fragment to the list of C-text manuscripts. Abbreviated references only are given for published works cited, in the form of key words from the title, and where appropriate the name of the author or editor. The Bibliography is designed principally to provide full details of the references.

Abbreviations

BL	British Library, London
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
Bod. Lib.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
CT	Chaucer, <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> , ed. F. N. Robinson
CUL	Cambridge University Library
EETS	Early English Text Society
Huntington Lib.	Huntington Library, San Marino, California
MED	<i>Middle English Dictionary</i>
Nat. Lib. Wales	National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
PL	<i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus</i> , series latina, ed. J. P. Migne
RP	<i>Rotuli Parliamentorum</i>
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin
Vatican Lib.	Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

Introduction: tradition and the new anticlericalism

Anticlericalism was as important for the reading as for the writing of *Piers Plowman*, if we may judge by the notes and comments medieval readers recorded in the margins of the manuscripts. Readers were interested in the full range of the poem's anticlerical satire. Attacks on friars attracted a great deal of notice. The Great Doctor of theology, enjoying a hearty meal while the Dreamer and Pacione look on hungrily, was evidently not to be missed. Besides using *notas* to catch the reader's attention, annotators commented 'be war of fals freris', 'contra fratres', and 'Doctours of freris'. One manuscript even includes a picture of a friar.¹ Early readers also enjoyed the encounter between Mede and her friar. We find notes in the margins of this sequence such as 'how freris shryuen folk', 'nota de freris pat bepe confessours', and 'a comfessour as a frere comforted Mede and sayde as 3e may rede'.² Sire *Penetrans domos*, the friar who stupifies Contricion in the final passus, attracted notes such as 'ffrere flaterer' and 'ffrere leche'.³

It was not just the antifraternel satire which medieval readers thought worthy of notice. Attacks on the higher ranks of the clergy also attracted comment. 'Lo lordis and prelatys', wrote a medieval reader beside a passage in which clerics are instructed to preach against the feasting of harlots, while with 'beth war bischoppis' an annotator endorsed criticism of bishops who ordain unworthy priests.⁴ Criticism of abuses among the parish clergy was also relished. Conscience's threat that benefices shall be removed from priests and parsons who hunt with anything but *Placebo* provoked 'nota huntynge curatis' in one manuscript. Neglect of the parish of another kind, among priests and parsons who prefer rich chantries in London, attracted 'nota de persones and preechours' and 'here preieden persons and parische preestis of leue to dwelle at Londoun'.⁵ Medieval readers showed keen interest in satire against the endowed religious orders. 'Religioun' alerted readers to a passage against outriding monks, and the same annotator wrote 'war munkes and chanouns' beside the injunction 'Whoso wole be pure parfit moot possession forsake' (B XI 276).⁶ We may note a certain amount of inference here, for the passage does not specify monks and canons. Specific inferences like this are not uncommon, though generalisations are perhaps more usual. Anima's attack on avaricious clerics specifies many different offenders: priests, preachers, summoners and clerical executors, but an annotator saw a general implication for the clergy and a warning for the laity, commenting 'beth war

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of pis lered and lewed'. In another manuscript, Anima's simile of corrupt parsons, priests and preachers as the rotten root of a leafless tree was taken as generally anticlerical: 'exemplum contra clericos'.⁷

Medieval readers were engaged by more than the poem's witty or biting anticlerical satire; they were also interested in the associated theoretical questions raised in the poem. Anticlericalism raised the question of the state of poverty proper to the clergy, of whether clerics should own property – either personally or communally – and whether they should beg, or work. Readers were alert to treatment of the issue in the poem; for example, one annotated the encounter between Nede and the Dreamer, where the question of mendicancy is raised, with 'nota de nede hath no lawe', and 'nota de ned'.⁸ Antifraternalism involved the question of abuse of the sacrament of penance, thus 'Schrifte' was noted beside the antifraternal passages of B xx. In the same manuscript, the note 'De potestate regis' at the end of B xix highlights the question of the king's power to tax the clergy and the laity.⁹

These examples of medieval commentary remind the modern reader of the range and importance of anticlericalism in *Piers Plowman*, and suggest that the liveliness of the issue was not confined to the poem itself; that it was a matter of concern for medieval readers also. However, despite the fact that it was very much a contemporary issue, scholars have viewed the anticlericalism of *Piers Plowman* generically and genealogically, rather than considering it from the perspective of the *Piers Plowman* period.¹⁰ Critical studies dealing with anticlericalism in this poem, or in other contemporary English literature, have taught us a great deal about the origins and antecedents of anticlerical writing, but rather less about the characteristics of anticlericalism in the *Piers Plowman* period itself.

Previous studies have identified in *Piers Plowman* and other writings various traditions of satire and polemic against clerics. Yunk, for example, in *The Lineage of Lady Meed*, researched the ancestry of this satire in a curial tradition of Latin writing against clerical venality. The thesis of Jill Mann's important study, *Chaucer and Medieval Estates Satire*, was that the traditions of satire against the clerical estate accounted for the clerical portraits in the *General Prologue*, and incidentally, for anticlerical satire in other contemporary writings such as *Piers Plowman*. Bloomfield's *Piers Plowman as a Fourteenth-Century Apocalypse* was an attempt to place the poem in a tradition of monastic writing. Bloomfield argued that monastic literary traditions of polemical history, of prophecy and of antifraternalism, were revived in the *Piers Plowman* period by monks, as a means of defending themselves against the friars, whose claims to perfection rivalled their own. Bloomfield's perspective was not wide enough to permit him to see the use of monastic material in the poem as anything other than traditional, yet despite this limitation, his book made an important contribution by showing the relevance to *Piers Plowman* of contemporary writings for and against the monks.

Antifraternalism has been the most studied of all the anticlerical traditions.

Introduction: tradition and the new anticlericalism

Studies by scholars such as Williams, Fleming, Adams and Szittyá have taught us a great deal about the origins and characteristics of that stream of medieval writing against friars which includes *Piers Plowman*. The major study in this area is Szittyá's *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*. Writings issued during a conflict between the secular clergy and the friars at the University of Paris in the middle of the thirteenth century have been identified by historians of antifraternalism as the source of the tradition. While the friars rivalled the monks as religious orders with a claim to perfection, they rivalled the secular clergy as priests and preachers. The immediate cause of the dispute at Paris seems to have been the friars' claims to the status of master – in other words, to the right to teach students at the university – but the controversy ranged over the wider areas of conflict, as the secular clergy challenged the friars' role as preachers and confessors. For the seculars, the major disputant was William of St Amour, whose fierce polemics against the friars have been regarded as the main source of the antifraternal tradition. The best known of his writings, then as now, was *De Periculis Novissimorum Temporum*, a tract on the perils of the last days, issued in 1256. It is a polemical interpretation of 2 Tim. 3, which implies and develops an identification between the hypocritical self-lovers predicted in the biblical passage and the friars. A longer exegetical polemic, the *Collectiones Catholicae et Canonicae Scripturae* (1265–6), was probably meant as a reply to two of the friars' defenders, Thomas Aquinas and Thomas of York. Besides writing these wide-ranging polemics, William considered individual issues, such as mendicancy, in *quaestiones* against the friars. It has been established that many of William's writings were known in England in the following century; sometimes, Szittyá has shown, excerpts circulated in encyclopaedic works such as the *Omne Bonum*.¹¹ After the Paris conflict, there were recurrences of the quarrel between the secular clergy and the friars, most notably when the seculars were defended by John de Pouilli in the 1320s and by Richard FitzRalph in the 1350s. Historians and literary scholars have seen the literature associated with these later phases of the conflict as part of a tradition inaugurated in William's writings.¹²

Studies of anticlerical traditions have taught us a good deal, but this perspective has also led to some distortions and imprecision in accounts of the anticlericalism of *Piers Plowman* and other Middle English writings. For example, in studies of antifraternal literature by Williams, Fleming and Szittyá, antifraternalism has been treated as a tradition whose origins are the key to its meaning. Such studies discover continuities with the past, but are less able and likely to discover adaptations for the present. This approach has not provided a satisfactory basis for identifying what is characteristic of later fourteenth-century anticlerical writing, and for relating it to contemporary debate. Williams and Fleming, for example, illustrated Chaucer's antifraternal writing using as sources the literature from much earlier conflicts, without establishing the meaning of the tradition in the later fourteenth century. Williams argued that Chaucer had put into poetic form the charges

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made against the friars by William of St Amour, and repeated by later polemicists such as FitzRalph. Fleming, writing of Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*, argued that Chaucer also had a debt to the propaganda of the Franciscan Spirituals, who split from the order on the question of poverty in the early fourteenth century.¹³ Szittyá argued that late Middle English antifraternality writing had a 'symbolic dimension' carried over from William of St Amour's polemics. Szittyá applied this argument in his reading of the antifraternality of *Piers Plowman*, arguing that in the poem the 'traditional predisposition to see the friars symbolically' had been exploited for poetic purposes.¹⁴ The limitations of this kind of account as a basis for detailed comparisons and contrasts are apparent in a study by Nicholas Havely of friars in Chaucer and Boccaccio. Havely wrote informatively about the traditions to which these two writers were heirs but, describing antifraternality satire as 'densely populated with traditional stereotypes, allusions and accusations', had no convincing basis for his 'specific suggestions about the ways in which their representation of friars could be compared'.¹⁵ For example, Havely found that Chaucer's friars are given to wrath and envy, like those in *Piers Plowman* but unlike those in the *Decameron*, but he could offer no assurance that this is a significant difference, nor any explanation of it.¹⁶ Szittyá's chapter on *Piers Plowman* in *The Antifraternality Tradition in Medieval Literature* also shows the limitations of this approach. Acknowledging that identifying traditional features in the poem does not by itself provide an adequate account of antifraternality in *Piers Plowman*, he turned to 'the poem itself' for the 'answers'; thus his extensive researches into earlier and contemporary antifraternality texts become curiously peripheral in this chapter.¹⁷ Again, noting that a full study of the antifraternality aspects of *Piers Plowman* had never been made, and considering the conclusions of his own and Szittyá's earlier work, Adams speculated that such a study would lead to the finding that there are 'more basic affinities between Langland and the Parisian seculars of the previous century than between Langland and FitzRalph'.¹⁸ The present study does not confirm Adams's speculations.

The liveliness of anticlericalism as an issue in the poem, and among the poem's medieval readers, might lead us to expect some independence and innovation: discontinuities with the past, adaptations of traditions, new uses for conventions, new meanings for old satires and, if liveliness also implies conflict between clerics and anticlericals, then we might also expect that such new uses and new meanings would be a focus of conflict, that they would be contested, would sometimes fail to become established and would all the time be subject to refinement, to change and to revision. But the historical perspective has been much obscured in studies of anticlerical 'traditions', since they emphasise, inevitably, continuity with the past, and the importance of origins as the key to meaning. Such studies have largely ignored the continuations of the theoretical debate, and the changes in the political circumstances affecting the clergy which occurred after the traditions were first established. Medieval readers, we saw, were alert to the treatment in the

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poem of theoretical issues, and also to the wide range of attack on clerics; for them, the meaning of the poem's anticlericalism does not seem to have been simply the meaning of long-established, disparate, literary traditions. To understand the anticlericalism of *Piers Plowman*, we must remedy our failure of perspective.

There are ample sources for reconstructing the drama of the anticlericalism of the *Piers Plowman* period, for identifying and explaining its characteristics, and hence for understanding its literary implications. The parties to the previous conflicts may still be distinguished in the later fourteenth century, from their own points of view, at least, although definitions and identities were, as later chapters will show, increasingly fluid and controversial. As we have seen, the secular, or parish, clergy, were old enemies of the friars, and the friars were, in addition, long-standing opponents of the monks and other endowed clergy. These antagonisms reflected, traditionally, fundamental differences in their ways of living, based on philosophies which could hardly be reconciled. The secular clergy, as they saw it, derived their income from tithes and oblations in return for providing pastoral care in the parishes, such as preaching, hearing confessions, conducting baptisms and burying the dead. The monks, by contrast, derived their income from their holdings of property and land. As contemplative religious orders, they were not committed to pastoral work, as were the parish clergy; they were, however, theoretically prepared to undertake manual labour if necessary, although during this period, despite some financial strains, their property income seems to have been substantial enough for manual labour to remain part of the theory. The friars, like the monks, were members of regular orders, but while the monastic rules provided for property and manual labour, the friars professed to get a livelihood from begging. They eschewed both ownership of property and manual labour, for they were committed to spending their time on the spiritual labour of pastoral work. Consequently, they looked to the alms of the faithful for support. There was thus an underlying incompatibility between the friars and the secular clergy, and between the friars and the monks. As beggars with a pastoral ministry, the friars competed with the secular clergy for the wealth and pastoral work of the parishes. As members of religious orders who rejected as imperfect living on property or manual labour, they brought into question the claims of the monks. The underlying incompatibility between the seculars and the friars erupted first as a serious dispute in the Paris conflict of the 1250s; clashes between the monks and the friars can also be documented from this period.¹⁹

We cannot understand the later fourteenth-century eruptions of these debates simply from the perspective of tradition; we must consider also their contemporary implications.²⁰ A variety of new pressures at this time combined to widen and increase interest in the rights and obligations of the clergy. Claims asserted by one clerical group against another were supplemented by, and became the objects of interest among, outside parties. The laity, the crown and the papacy all had, in this period, a particularly intense

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interest in clerical questions. For the crown and the papacy, the clergy were an important source of revenue, via such mechanisms as taxation and subsidies. For the laity, the clergy were a drain on resources, as recipients of alms and tithes, as able-bodied who did not contribute their labour and as fellow-taxpayers who did not appear to pay a fair share to the crown, or who diverted much-needed resources abroad to the papacy. These concerns were particularly acute during the *Piers Plowman* period, as a result of a combination of natural and political difficulties and disasters. The virulent and deadly bubonic plague which broke out in 1348, and again in 1361–2 and 1369, brought high mortality rates to parishes and a labour shortage, both of which had implications for clerics who financed spiritual work from the tithes or alms of parishioners.²¹ Pressures from natural disaster were exacerbated by unusually heavy fiscal demands on the national purse. Gregory XI began, from the 1370s, to press demands for financial assistance from the English clergy, in order to fund wars in the Italian states.²² Edward III was committed to contesting his claim to the French throne; the protracted and intermittent military campaign was the reason for a series of tax-raising efforts directed at both clergy and laity during this period.²³ These pressures made the political position of the clergy complex and unstable, as well as having implications for their internal strains and disputes. The laity's interests were served by an anticlerical, antipapal, stance: their burden of finance for the French war would be the lighter as the clergy's was made heavier; moreover, competition from the papacy for the clergy's wealth was to be resisted.²⁴ It is not surprising that, when the Peasants' Revolt took place in 1381, the rebels' wrath was extended to the clergy, who indirectly increased the laity's burden of taxation, as well as to the lay lords who had been favoured directly by the novel imposition of a poll-tax.²⁵ But less obvious were the best positions for each of the factions of the clergy, and for the crown, to adopt. For example, the aggressive papal demands on the English clergy which characterised the 1370s were, predictably, met with hostility on the part of the crown; when the papal demands clashed with his own need for war finance in 1373 Edward III prevented delivery to English prelates of the letters which set out the demands, yet in 1375 negotiation of a truce with France coincided with agreement to a papal subsidy, in return, most plausibly, for the appointment of royal favourites and allies to some important English benefices; a grant to the pope seems to have been traded for a gain of greater compliance from the clergy at home.²⁶ The clergy's attitudes to the competing claims on them of crown and papacy varied, shifted and were confused; the old internal rivalries were exacerbated, made more dangerous and transformed by these external pressures. At stake was the issue of the relation between temporal and spiritual powers: to deny the pope, though that was tempting, was to endorse the lordship of the king over the clergy. On the other hand, it was easier to resist the papacy than the crown.²⁷ Support for the crown's demands was attractive to the friars, as long as they could channel the consequences against the endowed clergy, and away

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from themselves. We find Austin friars arguing the anticlerical case in a parliament of 1371, and a Franciscan supporting the king in a Great Council held at Westminster to discuss papal demands, in 1373.²⁸ But certain of their enemies from among the secular clergy also had an interest in anticlericalism, as a weapon against those they considered more favoured than themselves. The Wycliffite secular cleric Nicholas Hereford put forward the argument, in a sermon delivered on Ascension Day 1382, the year after the Peasants' Revolt, that the king would not need to burden the laity so heavily with taxation if monks, friars and other wealthy clerics were reformed.²⁹

May McKisack, writing of the anticlericalism of the 1370s, remarked: 'Denunciations of ecclesiastical riches were not, of course, new; what was new was the attempt to find a metaphysical basis for anti-clericalism and at the same time to translate it into terms of political action'.³⁰ But this account of the 'newness' of anticlericalism in this period leaves out the internal clerical politics and their history. There were implications for the long-standing divisions among the clergy; the new circumstances regenerated and transformed the old conflicts. When we examine the careers and writings of anticlerical polemicists and of clerical apologists, and the disputes in which they were engaged, in the *Piers Plowman* period, we do not find simply a repetition of the earlier clashes, but debates modified by the new, wider, less stable, less predictable, more dangerous implications the old differences now had for all clerics.

During the period many subjects were debated, but the fundamental issue was now that of clerical dominion, or lordship. This was the question of the authority by which powers and property were held. Debate on the old issues, such as poverty and pastoral care, continued, as we shall see, but debate now took place within the wider context of the dominion controversy. This shift of perspective was the intellectual consequence of the widened political implications of the old debates. A major source for the arguments involved was the writings of Richard FitzRalph (d.1360), the Archbishop of Armagh who defended the secular clergy against the friars in the middle years of the fourteenth century.

FitzRalph has been treated as a 'traditional' antifraternist polemicist, who owed much to the antifraternism established by William of St Amour. His own time, however, seems to have considered him an innovator, for his works were widely copied, studied and used by later polemicists. From Katherine Walsh's biography, *A Fourteenth-Century Scholar and Primate: Richard FitzRalph in Oxford, Avignon and Armagh*, we know much about FitzRalph's career, while there are several narrative accounts of his dispute with the friars.³¹ However, although his efforts and writings have long been recognised as important for polemicists in the later part of the century, there has been little detailed study of his thought and strategies, and of the nature of, and precise reasons for, their later importance. This is perhaps because FitzRalph has been thought of as 'traditional', but it is no doubt also because few of his works have been edited in modern times.³² An exception to have

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escaped the general neglect is his *proposicio* on the problem of the friars' privileges, *Unusquisque*, which he delivered at Avignon in 1350, and which has been edited by Hammerich.³³ FitzRalph's major theoretical work, a treatise on dominion cast in the form of a dialogue, *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, was partly printed by Poole as an appendix in his edition of Wyclif's *De Dominio Divino*, because he considered it a source for Wyclif's own theory of dominion. Poole printed only half of the eight books which make up the treatise, and the complete work was not widely available even in medieval times.³⁴ The treatise was produced, FitzRalph tells us in the Prologue, in response to a request received while he was at Avignon (probably in 1349–50) from Clement VI. Clement commissioned him to investigate questions of dominion and poverty currently controversial among the mendicant orders.³⁵ The result was evidently of interest beyond curial circles. The first seven books were circulating in Oxford at least by 1356–7, and the large number of extant manuscripts testifies to their wide circulation in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as, of course, does their use by later writers, such as Wyclif.³⁶ The eighth book, *De Mendicitate Fratrum et eorum Privilegiis*, was added c.1359.³⁷ Here the implications of the theoretical books for the friars' privileges and property are explored in more detail. This final book seems to have had a more limited circulation than the rest of the work. The leading Benedictine monk Adam Easton had a copy of the entire treatise made before 1381, but there are few complete copies extant. However, there is some evidence that the eighth book circulated separately from the rest of the treatise as a pamphlet.³⁸

Some of FitzRalph's other writings against the friars circulated even more widely than the *De Pauperie Salvatoris*. On the basis of numbers of extant manuscripts, the best known of his polemics was the *Defensio Curatorum*, a Latin *proposicio* delivered at Avignon in 1357, and soon well known in Oxford. Most modern readers who know the work have used the English translation made by John Trevisa in the later fourteenth century.³⁹ This translation is itself testimony to the wide interest FitzRalph's polemics attracted in the later part of the century. Fowler's attempt to identify Trevisa with the author of the B-text of *Piers Plowman* has little evidence to support it, and has rightly therefore not been generally accepted.⁴⁰ But Fowler's work on Trevisa has revealed a figure whose interests and career are indicative of a strand of late fourteenth-century culture of importance for the anticlericalism of the *Piers Plowman* period. Fowler has shown that Trevisa was a secular priest critical of the regular clergy, possibly associated with Wyclif at Oxford, engaged in turning into English texts relevant to the relations of church and state: Higden's *Polychronicon*, pseudo-Ockham's *Dialogus*, as well as, at an unknown date, FitzRalph's *Defensio Curatorum*. Translation of Latin polemic into English in itself implies a certain change of use; and it may even be that readers of contemporary English poetry were also Trevisa's readers; certainly, the work of Doyle and Parkes has shown that in terms of manuscript production, Trevisa was associated with Chaucer, Gower and

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Piers Plowman.⁴¹ Also of interest to later readers were FitzRalph's sermons, records of which survive from the period 1344–59. In several manuscripts these records take the form of a sermon-diary. The four which survive from a series of antimendicant sermons delivered in London during 1356–7 were much copied, especially the fourth, on Eph. 5:6, *Nemo Vos Seducat Inanibus Verbis*. These London Sermons, although originally delivered in English, survive in a lengthy polished Latin form, evidently intended for publication, but whoever acted as FitzRalph's literary executor clearly thought that the brief notes from the sermon-diary were worth preserving as well, perhaps because here too many of FitzRalph's characteristic themes are to be found.⁴² Besides manuscript circulation, quotation by later writers also indicates the importance of the sermons. Examples of quotation are in the *Omne Bonum*, in Wyclif, and in the Wycliffite compendium *Rosarium Theologie*.⁴³

An approach to FitzRalph's thought has been made in an important article by James Doyne Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph and the Fourteenth-Century Poverty Controversies'. Dawson, however, dealt in detail only with *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, and did not pursue the implications of his findings for understanding FitzRalph's other polemics, which he considered traditional ('not very original anti-mendicant preaching'), or for understanding the later importance of FitzRalph's writings.⁴⁴ Yet there is a great deal of material to enable us to reconstruct something at least of the circumstances within which FitzRalph was working, and thus to understand better his strategy and thought, and much too for later debates influenced by his writings, to help us to understand the course of the dominion issue in the context of the new pressures on the clergy. For the FitzRalph affair, there is much documentary material; a particularly important source is Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College MS 64, in which are preserved documents drawn up by the friars, as well as FitzRalph's own writings.⁴⁵ Especially useful are treatises produced by the friars themselves, too often neglected in studies which emphasise the 'traditional' perspective. We have these from the FitzRalph period, and from the later debates. The writings of Geoffrey Hardeby, an Austin friar, are especially revealing, since they link the earlier and later periods. Hardeby published *De Vita Evangelica*, a defence of the friars' profession, in 1385, probably as a result of Wyclif's attack on the friars. Significantly, though, although published late in the century, the treatise includes rebuttals of FitzRalph's arguments in *De Pauperie Salvatoris* and the *Defensio Curatorum*. It is reasonable to accept Walsh's proposal therefore, that parts of the treatise originated in disputations at Oxford in the 1350s, and that revision and publication had become appropriate when FitzRalph's arguments were revived by Wyclif.⁴⁶

Roger Conway was another of FitzRalph's opponents. This Franciscan friar defended his order against FitzRalph at Avignon. He died soon after FitzRalph, but was long remembered as a principal defender of the friars, and his writings, like FitzRalph's, were used as sources by later polemicists, sometimes in preference to, or as a result of confusion with, the works of his

more illustrious forebears. At the papal court in Avignon in 1359 he issued his *Defensio Religionis Mendicantium*, in reply to a tract by FitzRalph on the pastoral question, *De Audientia Confessionum*. Conway's treatise became, however, associated with FitzRalph's *Defensio Curatorum*, and thus circulated widely in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, because it was often included in the same codex as the well-known treatise by FitzRalph.⁴⁷ Three of Conway's *quaestiones* on the poverty issue also survive; they are thought to have been composed at Avignon c.1358–9, in reply to FitzRalph's *De Pauperie Salvatoris*.⁴⁸ Conway was not just widely read by later polemicists; he became an authority for the pro-fraternal cause. John Erghome, the Austin friar, possessed a copy of his *Defensio Religionis Mendicantium*, and the Carmelite friar Richard Maidstone used him as an authority in his defence of the friars.⁴⁹ His fame continued into the fifteenth century, when his work was still copied. Three *articuli* by Bonaventure were mistakenly attributed to his authorship in one manuscript, such was his fame.⁵⁰

The Hardeby and Conway writings help us to understand the dimensions of the FitzRalph conflict, and to measure its influence in the later period. The writings of Richard Maidstone, who used Conway, were new in the later period, emerging from a later dispute, although precise dating is problematic. The Carmelite friar's opponent was John Ashwardby, vicar of St Mary's Church in Oxford. Nothing of Ashwardby's polemic survives, beyond what Maidstone reports. Maidstone's surviving polemics are the *Protectorium Pauperis*, and a related *determinatio* against Ashwardby. Arnold Williams, editor of the *Protectorium*, dated that work 1380, and the *determinatio* slightly later, 1380–2.⁵¹ However, this dating should be treated with caution. Williams based it on a scribal note in one of the two manuscripts (Bod. Lib. MS e. Mus. 86, the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*), a late manuscript (1439), wrongly dated by Williams as late fourteenth-century; this may have influenced his acceptance of the scribal dating, but it is called into question by the fact that Ashwardby did not become vicar of St Mary's until 1384.⁵² It is however clear that the *arguments* attacked and defended in Maidstone's works were in circulation in the early 1380s. Similar opinions to Ashwardby's were attributed to an unnamed Wycliffite in Knighton's *Chronicon* entry for the year 1382 while W. R. Thomson, Wyclif's bibliographer, compared arguments in one of Wyclif's polemical sermons (probable date 1383) with the views Maidstone was attacking.⁵³

It may be that the Maidstone–Ashwardby dispute was in part at least a revival of another Oxford conflict of the early 1380s, when Wyclif's follower Nicholas Hereford preached the controversial Ascension Day sermon which related high taxes to clerical abuses. The Wycliffite whom Knighton preferred not to name may have been Philip Repingdon, one of Hereford's allies.⁵⁴ Maidstone had looked to FitzRalph as a source for pernicious antifraternal views; Hereford looked to FitzRalph as an authority, although, as we have seen, he widened his attack beyond the friars to include other clerics. Hereford's sermons have not survived, but we know something of

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them from the notes and reports made by his opponents. The friars complained to John of Gaunt about his slander, while the Benedictine monk John Wells and the Carmelite friar Peter Stokes complained of a sermon he preached before the clergy during Lent 1382 at St Mary's Church.⁵⁵ For the Ascension Day sermon (15 May), appropriately, he widened his audience to include the laity, for whom his views on taxation would have held an appeal, by preaching in English in St Frideswide's churchyard. We know the details of this sermon from the Latin notes made by a notary called Fykyes whom Peter Stokes had commissioned.⁵⁶ Repingdon preached a controversial sermon a few weeks later, on Corpus Christi Day (5 June), apparently repeating some of Hereford's points, although this is less well documented. News of the scandal was conveyed to Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was at the time involved with the London Blackfriars Council, which had been assembled for the consideration of Wyclif's views. When the Council reassembled on 12 June Hereford and Repingdon were among those whose right to preach and teach university and city audiences was suspended.⁵⁷

Friars such as Maidstone and Stokes were clear that their interests lay in opposing polemicists whose sources were FitzRalph and Wyclif, whereas friars in the early 1370s, as we have seen, supported anticlericalism in the 1371 parliament, and antipapalism and anticlericalism in the 1373 Great Council. One friar who was, however, particularly quick to see the implications of Wyclif's use of FitzRalph was William Woodford. Woodford, a Franciscan, began to challenge Wyclif from c.1373, and issued c.1376 *De Dominio Civili Clericorum*, a treatise on clerical dominion which was a reply to Book Two of Wyclif's *De Civili Dominio*, and which was in turn answered in Book Three of Wyclif's work.⁵⁸ His other polemical works were probably issued too late to be used as evidence for the controversies contemporary with *Piers Plowman*, for example his *Defensorium Mendicitatis* (c.1394–6), but, like the works by Maidstone and Hardeby, polemics such as this testify to the continuing perception of FitzRalph's writings as the basis of the antimedical position.⁵⁹

The monks found their own defenders, to study the implications of the political debate for their own position, and to take forward traditional defences of their orders in ways effective and appropriate in the new context. The involvement of Benedictines such as John Wells and Adam Easton is typical of the intense interest taken by the Black Monks in these debates. One of the most energetic, productive and versatile polemicists was the Benedictine Uthred of Boldon who engaged in conflicts both with the friars and with Wyclif. A full study of the many sources for Uthred's career is badly needed; there is no fully comprehensive history of Uthred's life and writings, and although some of the different aspects of his work have been investigated, there has been little attempt to relate them. Struck by apparent links between his quarrel with the Dominican friar William Jordan and the antifraternalism of *Piers Plowman*, Marcett published an edition of Uthred's antifraternal

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polemic *Contra Querelas Fratrum* (c.1366–8).⁶⁰ Also extant, seemingly from the same date, is a *quaestio* on preaching and mendicancy, *Utrum Paupertas Mendicitatis*.⁶¹ We may also have some *quaestiones* by Uthred from the 1350s on controversial theological issues.⁶² Wyclif's attack on 'private religions' seems to have provoked the composition by Uthred of two tracts in defence of the monastic life: *De Substantialibus Regule Monachalis* and *De Perfectione Vivendi in Religione*.⁶³ Uthred may also have been responsible for *De Institutis Monachorum*, a reworking of an older monastic defence from Bury St Edmunds.⁶⁴ The *De Institutis Monachorum* is but one of several versions of a defence of monastic life from Bury St Edmunds which are associated with monastic apology in the period. Known to modern scholars as the Monk of Bury's Treatise, this work seems have been compiled in the first half of the fourteenth century, at Bury St Edmunds. Many different redactions were made in the later part of the century, and in the following century. In these later versions the treatise became associated with more obviously polemical material.⁶⁵ Uthred's contributions to the controversy over church possession and dominion include *De Dotacione Ecclesie Sponse Christi* and *Contra Garrulos Dotacionem Impugnantes*.⁶⁶ It seems likely that these should be related to the monastic response to Wyclif (and perhaps the friars) in the 1370s, when Wyclif issued a *determinatio* against Uthred, and Uthred was involved in the controversy over papal tribute, and fellow Benedictine monks Adam Easton and Thomas Brinton also tried to defend the regulars.⁶⁷ Uthred's involvement with the papal question is known from the account of the Great Council at Westminster in 1373.

Exploiter of FitzRalph, inspirer of Hereford, Repingdon and Ashwardby, opponent of Woodford, Hardeby, Wells, Easton and Uthred of Boldon, John Wyclif is of course the outstanding controversialist of the *Piers Plowman* period. While many of the writings of his followers may have been produced too late to have influenced the writing of *Piers Plowman*, Wyclif himself was certainly flourishing during the *Piers Plowman* period.⁶⁸ Wyclif's career and writings illustrate the new anticlerical exploitation of FitzRalph, its context and implications. But in studies of Wyclif, as of the other polemicists of the period, the account of the reception and exploitation of FitzRalph's theory of dominion has been confused and unsatisfactory. With Wyclif the difficulty is compounded not, as in some of the other cases, by the absence of printed editions of his writings, but by the lack of a comprehensive study of his thought.⁶⁹ There is little question of his debt to FitzRalph; it was acknowledged by Poole's inclusion of part of *De Pauperie Salvatoris* in his edition of *De Dominio Divino*, and indeed, Wyclif himself often referred to FitzRalph as an authority.⁷⁰ Yet, while scholars have acknowledged the debt, they have not satisfactorily explained Wyclif's use of FitzRalph's theory of lordship. Some scholars have argued that the theory was unimportant or even unnecessary to Wyclif's philosophy.⁷¹ Studying Wyclif's use of the theory in the context of the debate about clerical dominion, however, provides a perspective from which we may begin to

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understand its contemporary importance and implications. Wyclif's career and writings show as clearly as any in the period how external pressures on the clergy, exerted by the crown, the papacy and the laity, had brought a new urgency to the old questions about clerical authority, and new, dangerous, ways of interpreting and answering those questions.

Wyclif's anticlerical exploitation of the theory of dominion is clear in *De Civili Dominio*, the third part of his *Summa Theologie*. This third section of the *Summa* has been dated late 1375 – late 1376.⁷² Here Wyclif attacked clerical property, and the authority of 'private' religious orders. The work was generated by current debate; as we have seen, Woodford expressed objections to Book Two, and Wyclif answered these in Book Three. Wyclif also refers in the course of the work to opposition from Benedictine polemicists, and to earlier phases of the controversy, during which anticlericalism had already acquired more broadly political implications. Wyclif says he heard anticlerical arguments put forward in parliament in 1371; this may be associated with the affair of the two Austin friars, and may even show his early involvement with the crown's anticlerical policy.⁷³ The *determinatio* issued against Uthred, and another against the Benedictine William Binham, seem to be the earliest writings in which Wyclif allied himself with the anticlerical, antipapal line, in defence of the crown; indeed, it appears from the Binham *determinatio* that Wyclif was familiar with the deliberations of the 1373 Great Council.⁷⁴ But whatever his personal involvement with these earlier clashes, by the publication of *De Civili Dominio* c.1376, there is clear evidence that the political implications of Wyclif's work had been recognised and acted upon, for Wyclif attracted patronage from the anticlerical court, principally from John of Gaunt, and disquiet from prelates. In the later part of 1376 the Bishop of Winchester, William of Wykeham, stood accused of corruption when he was Chancellor (1367–71). In 1371, in the course of the anticlerical parliament of that year, he had been dismissed from this office, and replaced by a lay Chancellor. The resumed anticlericalism on the part of the crown in this matter is associated with a summons of Wyclif from Oxford to London, at the instigation of John of Gaunt, in September 1376. According to the *Chronicon Angliae* and the *Anonimale Chronicle*, Wyclif preached in London against prelates.⁷⁵ Perhaps by way of revenge for the Wykeham affair, William Courtenay, at that time Bishop of London, summoned Wyclif before him in 1377 (presumably on account of his preaching, although the precise charges are not known); Gaunt defended Wyclif, and the proceedings broke up in confusion and riot.⁷⁶ As late as 1378 Wyclif appears in defence of the crown against the clergy. At a parliament at Gloucester Wyclif defended the king's violation of the Sanctuary of Westminster, where the abbot had been harbouring the escaped debtors Haulay and Shakyl.⁷⁷ By this time, Wyclif's writings had provoked alarm even among clerics overseas in papal circles. In November 1376 a Benedictine – probably Adam Easton – wrote from Avignon asking for copies of some of Wyclif's anticlerical writings, and in 1377 Pope Gregory XI issued bulls against Wyclif's teachings.⁷⁸

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The drama of the emergence of the new anticlericalism was not, of course, merely one of protagonists; it was a drama of ideas and arguments and language, an intellectual and literary conflict. It is the intellectual and literary history of the conflicts which provides the basis for an account of the anticlericalism of *Piers Plowman*. The following chapters will focus on the issues, and their literary implications. We shall examine the transformation of the old conflict over pastoral care; we shall see how the poverty debate took on new meanings, how the old antagonisms between the religious orders acquired new and dangerous implications. To make an anticlerical English literature at this period was to work not only with tradition, but to work with tradition heated to dangerous malleability in the fire of the new controversies. Exploiting its literary potential, and confronting its problems, we shall see, was the contribution of *Piers Plowman* to the new anticlericalism.

The usurpation of priestly power and the transformation of an antifraternel satire

THE THEORY OF DOMINION AND THE CONFLICT OVER PASTORAL CARE

Sire *Penetrans domos* takes his name, as has often been noted, from a long line of confessors of uncertain powers and dubious morals. But in *Piers Plowman* he has only the name of his predecessors, and very few of their characteristics. It is true that he successfully penetrates Unity, but his powers in the poem are so diminished that one medieval reader glossed 'sire *Penetrans-domos*' with simply 'a general name for frere'.¹ That other confessor of thirteenth-century satire, Faus Semblant, the shape-shifting friar-confessor in the *Roman de la Rose*, finds little employment in *Piers Plowman*; perhaps a part in the crowd as Ypocrisie in the assault on Unity (while in the *Canterbury Tales* he is transmogrified from friar into Pardoner).² The diminution, in satirical literature of the later fourteenth century, of the powers of the traditional friar-confessor, arises from the transformation of an antifraternel satire, and provides a suggestive index of the nature of the change involved. In *Piers Plowman* the friars' pseudo-priestly powers to enchant and seduce are much weakened, even unnecessary. With Hende speche at the gate, magic is not needed to gain admittance to Unity and access to Conscience. In this poem, the claims of friars to priestly office as rivals to the parish priests, and the efficacy of their powers, are much less important issues than in the earlier satires. It is noteworthy that it is left to Chaucer's Pardoner (who makes no claim to priestly office at all) to raise the question of the relation between office and efficacy. These observations on the fates of the evil confessors of the satire of the previous century provide useful examples of a transformation fundamental to the anticlericalism of *Piers Plowman*, and a convenient point of entry to an account of it.

Readers accustomed to identifying the 'traditional' aspects of antifraternel satire in *Piers Plowman* might be surprised to recognise that the powers of the *penetrans domos* and the false-seeming confessor are less potent here than in earlier satires. Such a transformation is as unexpected as it is hard to explain, if the *Piers Plowman* satire is read in the light of the tradition alone. The original point of the *penetrantes domos* satire was, after all, the illicit power of the friar-confessor. Wishing to defend their exclusive rights to the office of confessor, the secular clergy had branded the friars with a biblical tag, in

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order to characterise them as intruders and usurpers. The words '*penetrantes domos*' are from 2 Tim. 3:6, where those who penetrate houses ('and there get miserable women into their clutches') are prophesied for the last days. William of St Amour had put forward the antifraternal reading of the text in his satirical treatise on the last days, *De Periculis Novissimorum Temporum*. Intrusion into the domain of the parish priest by the friar-confessor was henceforth characterised as a spiritual, and even physical, violation of the penitent. The illicit exertion of priestly power was a penetration of the house of conscience, and a seduction away from the parish priest. Sometimes it was implied that friars intruded into houses and seduced wives. The satirical tradition, and all of the associated topics and texts, defended the power of the parish priest against that of the usurping friar-confessor.³

Readings of the *Piers Plowman* satire in the light of this tradition have been based not merely on the thirteenth-century origins of the tradition, but also on the understanding that the quarrel was once again current in fourteenth-century England. FitzRalph's conflict with the friars in the 1350s was the greatest battle of this stage of the war, but there were skirmishes later in the century, during the *Piers Plowman* period. For example, c.1379-80, in the diocese of Durham, a Dominican friar, Richard Helmsley, was accused of erroneous preaching against the secular clergy. It was alleged that he had claimed in his sermons that the seculars were ignorant and ineffective confessors, far inferior to the friars.⁴ Such evidence for recurrences of the conflict over pastoral care in the fourteenth century has been seen as support for reading the *Piers Plowman* satire as a continuation of the old tradition. But closer examination of the nature and context of the conflict in the fourteenth century forces reconsideration of the view that it was a repetition of the earlier clashes. In turn, this requires that we look again at the satirical tradition in *Piers Plowman*.

In the mid fourteenth century there was developed a way of thinking about priestly powers which had a profound and far-reaching effect on subsequent anticlericalism. The application by Richard FitzRalph of a theory of dominion to the question of the friars' pastoral care provided an approach whose consequences and characteristics are manifest in the anticlericalism of *Piers Plowman*. The historical origins of the new way of thinking about priestly lordship are ironic in view of the nature of the anticlericalism which issued from it. It was a conflict generated by greatly increased emphasis on the priest's pastoral activities which gave rise to an anticlericalism characterised, at its most extreme, by a derogation of the role of the cleric as an intermediary between God and man. The new thinking about priestly lordship was probably developed with the limited objective of defending the priestly authority of one group of clerics, the secular clergy, against that of another group, the friars. But when political circumstances changed, it became the intellectual source for an anticlericalism which called into question the powers of *both* sides, and indeed, of all clerics. This had profound implications for the old satirical tradition. The old satire, grounded in the rights of

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the parish clergy, was drained of colour in the new context. In *Piers Plowman* traces of the old tradition are characterised by revisions of perspective, changes of emphasis, selection and adaptation. Some C-text revisions show even fuller purging of the associations of this antifraternal tradition with the cause of the secular clergy.

The new point of view is well illustrated by Wrape's satire on the conflict:

And now is fallen *perof* a fruyt *pat* folk han wel leuere
Shewen hire shriftes to hem pan shryue hem to hir *persons*.
And now *persons* han *parceyued* *pat* freres parte wip hem
Thise possessioners *preche* and depraue freres;
And freres fyndep hem in defaute, as folk berep witnesse,
That whan *pei* *preche* *pe* *peple* in many places aboute
I, wrape, walke wip hem and wisse hem of my bokes.
Thus *pei* speken of *spiritualte* *pat* eiper despisep ooper
Til *pei* be bope beggers and by my *spiritualte* libben,
Or ellis al riche and ryden; I, wrape, reste neuere
[That] I ne moste folwe this folk, for swich is my *grace*. (B v 142-52)

It is significant, and appropriate to the history and sources of the conflict over pastoral care, that this satirical account of the quarrel between the secular clergy and the friars, new in the B-text of *Piers Plowman*, should have been made a part of the confessions of the sins. The analysis of sin, which provides a temporary formal structure for this part of the poem, is a familiar part of the treatment of penance found in medieval manuals of pastoral care. The confession of sins was central to the programme of reform in pastoral care which gave rise both to a literature of reform, and to the literature of controversy. The importance of the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 to the subsequent reform movement is well known. In these decrees, and in the episcopal legislation which followed, there was an emphasis on adequate pastoral care in every parish. The proper and regular administration to all of the sacrament of penance was of central importance. The twenty-first decree of the Lateran Council, known by its opening words as *Omnis Utriusque Sexus*, required that every Christian should confess his sins at least once yearly to his own priest ('*proprius sacerdos*'). Both the Lateran Decrees and the episcopal statutes emphasised the importance of establishing a priesthood adequate, both in character and education, to this task.⁵ Priests were to have sufficient knowledge to be able to care for the souls of their parishioners by administering the sacraments properly, and by teaching the basic tenets of the faith in the vernacular language. A major literary consequence of the reform movement was the production of manuals of pastoral care, and syllabuses of instruction, for the use of the pastoral clergy.⁶

Several of the concerns fundamental to this movement for pastoral reform became important issues in the conflict between the secular clergy and the mendicant friars. The period during which reform had its beginnings saw the foundation of regular orders which reflected in their professions the new interest in pastoral care. Of particular importance for the later disputes was

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the foundation on apostolic principles of the Franciscans in 1209 and the Dominicans in 1216.⁷ This meant that the secular clergy now had rivals for the cure of souls in the parishes, among religious who made high claims for their great learning and exemplary conduct. When conflict over pastoral care between the mendicant orders and the seculars began to surface later in the thirteenth century, it was therefore the requirements for the priesthood set out in the Lateran decrees which became important issues. The secular clergy claimed that they alone were referred to by the term '*proprius sacerdos*' in *Omnis Utriusque Sexus*.⁸ Their claim was based on a certain theory of priestly power. This theory made a fundamental distinction between the regular clergy (in other words, members of religious orders) and the priesthood. The seculars maintained that their power to administer the sacraments was instituted by Christ, and transmitted to them directly through the apostolic succession. Bishops and priests were direct successors of the twelve apostles and seventy-two disciples to whom Christ had given the power of the keys. The friars disputed this claim on the basis of another theory of priestly power. They argued that they too could fill the office of '*proprius sacerdos*', since their power was derived from the pope, earthly head of the church and the '*proprius sacerdos*' of every Christian. Furthermore, their strict rules of poverty and their reputation for learning made them eminently suitable, they argued, to satisfy the need for a morally and educationally adequate priesthood.⁹

Wrape's satirical account of the rivalry between parish clergy and friars, quoted above, is therefore a reference to a conflict which was long-standing by the later fourteenth century. Perhaps it is partly because its previous history is well known that the later phase of the conflict has usually been treated as largely a repetition of the earlier clashes. There has been little attempt to distinguish the strategy and arguments of Richard FitzRalph and his followers from those of their predecessors. Accordingly, the place of FitzRalph's theory of dominion in his campaign against the friars has not been sufficiently explored, nor its significance for subsequent anticlericalism satisfactorily understood.¹⁰ The arguments developed by earlier antifraternel polemicists foundered because they could not maintain that the friars falsely claimed the powers of the '*proprius sacerdos*' without taking a deeply antipapal position, as will be shown below. FitzRalph's new approach provided a way of denying the friars pastoral care without denying that they might have access to the power of the keys through the pope. His opponents tried to show that he was repeating the errors of previous polemicists such as William of St Amour and John de Pouilli.¹¹ Therefore, when they have treated FitzRalph's approach to the friar question as a repetition of earlier positions, modern scholars have in effect followed the line taken by his opponents! For this reason, FitzRalph's strategy has not been apparent, and the connection between his various polemical writings has seemed obscure. Anxious to avoid the pitfalls of the juridical arguments, instead of pursuing the question of the friars' spiritual power FitzRalph examined the implications of that power for the friars' temporal dominion. This interpretation of

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FitzRalph's strategy accounts for his development of a theory of dominion in his polemical writings.

FitzRalph's use of his theory of dominion has usually been interpreted in a rather different way. Many have been unable to see much connection at all between his writings on dominion and his attack on the friars.¹² It has usually been argued that he used his theory to deny that the friars had a true claim to act as priests. In such accounts, it is argued that FitzRalph developed the Augustinian theory of dominion with grace. In this theory, all dominion rests on divine grace. Those not in a state of grace, because of sin, have no dominion. It has sometimes been thought that FitzRalph applied this to the friars' pastoral care by arguing that sinning friars lose cure of souls. Detailed exposition and examples below should however establish that this was not the basis of his position. FitzRalph's argument, it seems, was that by acting as priests the friars wrongly asserted temporal or civil dominion, not that they falsely claimed spiritual power. In his most important theoretical work, *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, FitzRalph investigated the nature of lordship. He distinguished two kinds of lordship or dominion over temporalities which humans might hold: original (or natural) lordship, and civil (or positive) lordship. Original lordship could be studied as that state which had prevailed before the fall of man, and was a kind of lordship available to all those in a state of grace. This was to be distinguished from civil lordship, which was guaranteed by human law, and only came about after the fall. On this basis, he was able to use the friars' own profession of poverty as authority for his claim that they should not have pastoral care. A full account of his interpretation of poverty in these terms will be reserved for chapter 3. Here it will be sufficient to note that FitzRalph's position was that, by professing evangelical poverty, the friars abrogated all civil lordship, and that accordingly pastoral care was denied to them, since for them it was a form of civil lordship, achieved and exploited by the assertion of rights under human law.¹³

This new approach to the issue of the friars' pastoral care changed the terms in which the question of their powers and privileges was discussed. The satirical account of the controversy in Wrape's confession reflects in theme and vocabulary the new basis of the quarrel in the later fourteenth century. But a further development may be seen, for subsequent developments had exploited further the implications of the vocabulary of lordship. Here the very *conflict* over pastoral care is satirised in vocabulary appropriate to the subject of clerical dominion over property. Parsons, whose services as confessors are allegedly passed over in favour of those of the friars, were not technically poor. They held benefices, deriving their income from the tithes and oblations of their parishes. However, it is surprising that the term 'possessioners' (B v 145) is used of them, since this was the usual word for members of the endowed regular orders.¹⁴ In the passage quoted, the word 'possessioners' is contrasted with 'beggars' (B v 150), and linked with 'spiritualte' (B v 149, 150), which meant, among other things, 'revenue from spiritual services'. Before the FitzRalph phase of the conflict, opponents of

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the friars had observed the irony that rectors were reduced to the status of beggars since the friars who claimed to be beggars defrauded them of the revenue they had customarily received from pastoral care. In 1309 the rectors of London complained that some of them were forced to beg because friars were usurping revenue due to the parishes. They requested clarification of the bull *Inter Cunctas* which, issued in 1304 by Benedict XI, revoked the important bull *Super Cathedram* of 1300, under which friars' pastoral activities were subject to licensing and control.¹⁵ The notion of sharing 'now persons han parceyued pat freres parte wip hem' (B v 144) was also well established. According to *Super Cathedram*, friars were to pay to the parish church one-quarter of all legacies, bequests and funeral dues received from the laity.¹⁶ More generally, the system of licensing confessors where necessary institutionalised the idea that friars were to share the pastoral burden. Abuses of the system of sharing had long been a subject of satire. In the pastoral manual *Memoriale Presbiterorum* the image of the 'societas leonina' (in Roman law, an illegal partnership whereby one partner is excluded from the profits) was used to characterise satirically the friars' attitude to sharing.¹⁷ However, in the *Piers Plowman* passage it is the very notion of sharing itself which is satirised. Here, sharing leads to an ironic confusion between friars and seculars, for it means that the seculars partake of the friars' beggary, and the friars of the seculars' possession. By sharing in the seculars' pastoral work, the friars become a party to property, 'spiritualte', that is, rights to revenue. Ironically, these possessioner friars might become beggars, as may the parsons, for if both sides persist in their conflict they may be reduced to living on the 'spiritualte' of wrath: 'Thus pei speken of spiritualte . . . Til pei be bope beggars and by my spiritualte libben' (B v 149-50).¹⁸ Equally, friars and parsons might become indistinguishable from rich laymen, or rich monks. This ironic comparison is suggested with 'ryden' (B v 151), which is associated with two satirical traditions.¹⁹ The love of a fine horse, perhaps for hunting, like a rich lay lord, is a detail of antimonastic satire familiar from Chaucer's portrait of the Monk. Friars were usually pictured as walkers, rather than riders, because riding was forbidden to them, and also because satirists enjoyed playing on Luke 9:3, 'Take nothing for the journey . . . neither stick nor pack', which was an important text in the friars' defences of mendicant poverty.²⁰ (An example of such satire is the description of the friar in the *Summoner's Tale*: 'He wente his wey . . . With scrippe and tipped staf, ytukked hye'.²¹) But riding could equally be an inversion of this, as in the case of Chaucer's Parson, who, in contrast both with proud possessioners and with beggars, goes about his parish 'Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf'.²² The riding image was used openly against friars by the clergy of the province of Canterbury in 1356. In a bill of complaints they too exploited the double-edged irony that friars rode about in greater splendour than even the greatest prelates in England.²³

The satirical confusion over precisely who is a possessioner, and who a beggar, is therefore distinguishable from earlier uses of these topics which

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were focussed simply on abuses of the system of pastoral care by the friars, in defence of the parish clergy. Here the antifraternial tradition has become more fully an *anticlerical* satire, no longer defending the interests of the parish clergy, but aimed at them as well as the friars. The bonds of the antifraternial tradition with the cause of the parish clergy had, ironically, been weakened when FitzRalph rejected the traditional approach based on a distinction between regulars and priests. Tackling the friar problem with his theory of dominion, he had chosen an approach potentially applicable to all priests, secular and regular. The emphasis on the sin of wrath again illustrates the anticlerical potential of FitzRalph's strategic adaptation of antifraternial tradition. Of course, both parties had traditionally complained that their opponents defamed them in sermons and, as here, connected this theme with the dispute over the friars' right to preach; as Wrape claims: 'pei preche pe peple in many places aboute' (B v 147). *Super Cathedram* provided that friars were free to preach in their own churches or in common places, except when a prelate was preaching. They might not preach in the parish church except by authority of the parish priest or his superior.²⁴ Examples of the seculars' complaints about abuses of this are in the London rectors' bill of complaints of 1309, and FitzRalph's *libellus* (the official statement of his case against the friars) known as *Coram Vobis*. Here he asserted that the friars preached 'Frequenter in locis propinquis huiusmodi ecclesiis in detractationem et opprobrium prelatorum et curatorum' ('Frequently in places nearby churches, criticising and abusing prelates and curates').²⁵ But wrath, more specifically, was associated with the assertion of rights, which was seen by the seculars as incompatible with claims to poverty. This point was often made in relation to cases in which the friars claimed funeral dues, but it also applied more generally to any kind of litigation, including that over rights to pastoral office. FitzRalph was able to exploit his theory of dominion to put forward the paradoxical argument that since the assertion of rights was sinful in those who vowed poverty, the claim to those rights was thereby lost. This accounts for the importance of wrath as a theme in antifraternial satire of the later fourteenth century. There are examples in a group of Latin poems which seem to be related to events in Oxford, for example, in *De Superstitione Phariseorum* where the poet attacks the angry friars ('fratribus iratis').²⁶ In *Unusquisque*, FitzRalph's *proposicio* of 1350 against the friars, it is claimed that the ambiguous relationship between friars and seculars leads to verbal and even physical strife 'per verba peruenitur ad verbera'. FitzRalph repeated the charge in the *Defensio Curatorum* of 1356, and Trevisa translated 'after wordes comeþ strokes'.²⁷ Chaucer's Summoner, who clashes with the friars over tithes, finds a fitting revenge on the friar who angers him in a tale which satirises a friar's wrath.²⁸ It is noteworthy that, of those manuscripts which include antifraternial annotation besides the Wrape passage, two draw attention to this theme with the note 'Ira ffreris'.²⁹ But the antifraternial tradition here has a more widely anticlerical implication; both friars and parish clergy are satirised for their wrath.

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Where the B-text has 'parson', 'possessioner' and 'beggar', the C-text has instead 'prelates' (C VI 119, 120), and links 'beggares and barones' (C VI 123). This is typical of how C-text revisions develop the broadly anticlerical tendency of the satire. The establishment and use of this satirical vocabulary in other writings which issued from the conflict provides a context for the interpretation of the choice and revision of these terms. 'Possessioners' does not seem to have been successful as a satirical term for the beneficed clergy, although it did become usual as a pejorative label for the endowed religious orders, often in pointed association with 'beggars'.³⁰ At least in Wycliffite works, it was exploited as a satirical term for friars, pointing up their hypocritical wealthiness, and deliberately confusing them with the traditional possessioners, as in the B-text passage. In the Wycliffite tract 'Of Clerks Possessioners', 'pes possessioners' is used of the friars in attacks on their wealth in books and buildings. Here 'religious mendynauntis' are the worst offenders among 'pes possessioners' who monopolise the book supply. On the theme of costly buildings, the writer remarks satirically 'pes mendynauntis passen alle opere possessioners in pis ypocrisie'.³¹ The collocation 'beggares and barones', new in the C-text, neatly expresses the confusion between possessioner and mendicant, clergy and laity, for 'barones' hints that clerical possession is close to secular lordship, while additional irony resides in the syntactic ambiguity over which are the 'barones' and which the 'beggares'.³² It is hard to be sure about the force of 'prelates' in *Piers Plowman*, because the word had both pejorative and non-pejorative uses, but there are cogent reasons for linking this word with the debate about spiritual power. In Wrape's confession the curious use of the term for parish priests, who complain that their parishioners are shriven without licence, links the satire here with a conflict over this word which seems to have begun with FitzRalph. Commenting in *Unusquisque* on the provisions of *Super Cathedralam* for the licensing of preachers, FitzRalph argued that the 'prelati' (who were established by the bull as those responsible for giving licences) included all those with cure of souls, 'maiores atque minores'. 'Prelati' therefore included curates, vicars, rectors and parish chaplains.³³ The friars almost immediately turned this against FitzRalph, challenging his right to call himself a prelate, by giving him the satirical title 'Dominus Ricardus se asserens archiepiscopum et primatem' ('Lord Richard who proclaims for himself the status of archbishop and primate').³⁴ It is easy to see, therefore, how later writers, critical of the hierarchy, could use 'prelates' anticlerically to connote misused institutional power and, increasingly, wealth.³⁵ In the B-text of *Piers Plowman* there are examples of pejorative uses, as for example in Clergie's speech, where 'prelates' refers to parsons and parish priests in some manuscripts:

For Abbotes and for Priours and for alle manere prelates

As persons and parissch preestes, pat preche sholde and teche . . .

(B x 273 and preceding B-text MS line printed in the
critical apparatus)³⁶

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Other examples of pejorative use are suggested by the collocation of 'prelates' with 'pope' and 'possession', and variations among the manuscripts and versions may indicate an increasing currency for use in a satirical sense.³⁷ This interpretation would be appropriate to the medieval annotation 'Contra prelatos' beside a passage about 'curatores' in Cotton Vespasian B xvi.³⁸

These details of Wrape's description of the conflict over pastoral care are characteristic of many examples in *Piers Plowman* of an anticlerical transformation of satirical themes, topics and vocabulary as a consequence of the exploitation for new anticlerical purposes of the new approach brought by FitzRalph to the controversy. Before further examples of this are discussed, however, it is necessary to examine further FitzRalph's antifraternism, and its acquisition of new anticlerical meanings in *Piers Plowman*.

RESTITUTION AND THE DEBT OF SIN

'*Non dimittitur peccatum donec restituatur [a]blatum*' ('The sin is not forgiven until restitution is made'): of those terms and concepts from the language and philosophy of dominion which were brought into the controversy over pastoral care, restitution was one of the most important for the new anticlericalism.³⁹ Restitution was fundamental to the new way of thinking about priestly power. It was part of an antifraternist language founded on the new philosophy which FitzRalph used in his polemics. Restitution was a recurrent theme in FitzRalph's writings. It was central to his case against the friars' pastoral care. The theme of restitution gave a new basis for using the old image of a thief for a friar who had pastoral care. Earlier writers, asserting that only a parish priest could fulfil the role of 'proprius sacerdos', using images from John 10:1, treated the friar as an intruder or stranger ('alienus') in the sheep-fold who had entered not by the door, but stealthily, like a thief. Thus William of St Amour glossed the text in *De Periculis*:

Alienus ergo, si rimetur conscientiam subditi alieni, non intrat per ostium, sed aliunde ascendit, & ideo dicitur penetrare domum tanquam fur & latro. Ioan. 10. *Qui non intrat per ostium in ouile ouium, sed ascendit aliunde, ipse fur est, & latro*. Sic ergo habemus qui sunt, qui penetrant domos.⁴⁰

(Therefore if the stranger probes the conscience of a member of another's flock, he enters not by the door, but by other means, and thus is said to penetrate the house like a thief and a robber. John 10: 'He is a thief and a robber, who enters the sheep-fold not by the entrance, but by other means.' Thus, therefore, we hold those who are such, who penetrate houses.)

As well as associating friars with the thieves to whom he claimed they gave absolution, FitzRalph also openly characterised them as thieves; for example, in a sermon recorded in an undated fragment at the beginning of his sermon-diary, he described them as 'usurpatores atque raptores' ('usurpers and plunderers') because they were 'mendicantes exempti qui decimas terrarum usurpant' ('exempt mendicants who usurp the tithes of the lands').⁴¹ However, in FitzRalph's writings the image of the thief had a quite different

basis from that in the earlier polemical writings. In describing the friar as one who entered the sheep-fold stealthily, earlier writers used the thief image to assert that a friar did not have the powers to act as a 'proprius sacerdos'. They claimed that, in order to satisfy the requirements of *Omnis Utriusque Sexus*, a penitent should reiterate to his parish priest confession made to a friar, because the parish priest had inherited his priestly power directly from the apostles and disciples, whereas priestly powers had been conferred on friars merely by the pope. For FitzRalph such an argument was useless, because it had been condemned as erroneous and dangerous earlier in the century, when used by John de Pouilli against the friars. John de Pouilli had been opposed by Peter de la Palu, who brought out and attacked the antipapalism of de Pouilli's position. Peter de la Palu had argued that the pope was the preeminent source of sacerdotal power, since he was the successor of St Peter, to whom the power of the keys had been given (Matt. 16:19).⁴² FitzRalph, evidently anxious to avoid the pitfalls of this argument, did not challenge the friars' claim to priestly power, but instead he claimed that the friars were like thieves of pastoral care because they had procured it in a sinful manner, since the assertion of dominion was contrary to their profession of poverty, and because their motives were therefore those of envy and greed. He was able therefore to argue with inexorable logic in the *Defensio Curatorum* that, since the claims of justice required restitution before the sin could be absolved, the friars could neither procure nor retain pastoral rights without sin, whatever papal legislation might say on the matter:

... nou3twipstonding pe titel pat is y-gete by pe pope, pei bep y-holde to make restitucioun in somme maner wise, for pe synne of pe allowyng & assenting pat is touched toforhand, in grauntyng of pe priuyleges, pat synne was nou3t relesched, noper my3t be relesched to pese freres but pei were verrey repentaunt & contrite. & as longe tyme as pis synne leup & dwellip in freres hit semep pat pei mowe nou3t be verrey repentaunt, but pei restore azen to persoons as forp as pei mowe, pat pei hauep wipdrawe. & so it semep pat while freres restorep nou3t azen pese riztes, pei mowe nou3t be verrey repentaunt, for pei bep nou3t dewe to pe freres by mannes lawe, pou3 pei haue graunt of pe pope.⁴³

Paradoxically, in procuring a pastoral role, the friars lost their rights to it.

The importance for the anticlericalism of *Piers Plowman* of this approach to the problem of the friars' pastoral care may be discerned in the 'possessioner' vocabulary used by Wrape, but there are even clearer examples elsewhere in the poem. The evidence suggests that these were part of a loaded satirical language, first developed by FitzRalph against the friars and in defence of the parish clergy, but with *anticlerical* potential which was later exploited. For example, FitzRalph's argument provides the basis for the attack on the friars' pastoral activity in passus xx, accounting for aspects of the language and themes both of this passage and of other writings of the period. Here Conscience recommends that the friars should not 'coueite cure' (B xx 253), and the poet rejects their claim to cure as false, because it represents a transgression of the commandment Exod. 20:17, '*Non concupisces rem*

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proximi tui' (B xx 279). This commandment was central to FitzRalph's attack on the friars' claims to jurisdiction, and was frequently quoted in his sermons. In his *proposicio Unusquisque* he quoted this text to prove that sin was a principle in the friars' acquisition of pastoral power. He invoked the principle of restitution to support his argument that friars could not repent of the sin involved in procuring power, so long as they retained that power.⁴⁴ Again, in his Third London Sermon he quoted Exod. 20:17 to support this argument, and the friars made it a point of contention in their *Appellacio* against him.⁴⁵ FitzRalph defended the charge in his Fourth London Sermon, and developed the point further in the *Defensio Curatorum*.⁴⁶ Roger Conway, one of FitzRalph's Franciscan opponents, defended friars against the charge of sinfulness in his *Defensio Religionis Mendicantium* of 1359.⁴⁷ In English satirical writings the word 'covet' seems to have been used as an economical way of expressing this widespread notion about the friars' procurement of cure of souls. Happy alliterative potential probably encouraged this, as with the alliteration of 'coueite' and 'cure' in passus xx, which neatly expresses FitzRalph's argument that coveting cure is contrary to the claims of justice.⁴⁸ Another *Piers Plowman* example occurs in passus xi, in the encounter between the Dreamer and a friar, where 'Couent', 'coueitep', 'confesse' and 'Catecumelynges' are alliterated:

... youre Couent coueitep to confesse and to burye
Raper pan to baptize barnes pat ben Catecumelynges. (B xi 76-7)

In FitzRalph's writings, and in *Piers Plowman* and other examples of the new anticlericalism, the 'thief' topic in its new guise is closely and consistently associated with the theme of restitution. The importance of restitution in the B- and C-texts of *Piers Plowman* is a characteristic shared with many writings which issued from the conflict over pastoral care in the later fourteenth century. The theme of restitution provided a focus for grievances over the perceived abuses, perils and inequities of the system of pastoral care. Although it was introduced into the debate by FitzRalph to avoid the pitfalls of his predecessors' arguments, it seems to have been associated philosophically and theologically with new ways of thinking which were potentially equally dangerous for clerics. Stressing the need for friars to make restitution of pastoral care was part of a new emphasis on the importance of restitution in the sacrament of penance.

The notions of debt and repayment were of major importance in the late medieval view of the sacrament of penance. The sacrament made available to penitents the release from sin which the death of Christ had won for man. In the older view, Christ's death was in the nature of a ransom, paid to the devil for the release of souls, but in the newer view, developed by Anselm, it was repayment of a debt due to God the father, which had been incurred by man's sin. The notion that Christ paid man's debt, or vicariously made satisfaction, was held alongside the understanding, in moral theology, that penance itself was payment by man of a penalty due to God on account of sin.⁴⁹ Restitution

was considered to be a kind of repayment of debt in writings concerned with the sacrament of penance in the late medieval period. Here, restitution was considered as repayment of a debt incurred through injury to another party. There was a marked emphasis on the restitution due to the injured earthly party, which was to be made by the penitent.⁵⁰ Although studies of confessors' manuals show that restitution had long been an element in the sacrament of penance, there is considerable evidence that the importance of this theme developed in association with the conflict between the secular clergy and the friars over pastoral work. There are also good reasons for suspecting that this emphasis should be linked with current theological and philosophical debate.

The new emphasis which may be discerned in *Piers Plowman*, for example in the major expansion of Coueitise's confession in the B-text on the theme of the restitution of ill-gotten gains, may be compared not merely with that of the polemics, but also with that in certain pastoral manuals.⁵¹ In the *Piers Plowman* passage, emphasis is placed upon restitution as a prerequisite for absolution from sin, on the authority of a maxim from canon law, '*Non dimittitur peccatum donec restituatur [a]blatum*' (B v 273a), for which the ultimate source appears to be Augustine.⁵² This maxim provided the authority for a passage on restitution in Thoresby's *Instructions*, which were issued at York in 1357.⁵³ Here it represents an addition to the possible model for the *Instructions*, Pecham's *De Informatione Simplicium*, significantly interpolated directly after the commandment against covetousness (Exod. 20:17); the emphasis also occurs in versions of the related English text known as the *Lay Folks' Catechism*.⁵⁴ Another pastoral manual from the period which shows a marked emphasis on restitution is the *Memoriale Presbiterorum*. In both cases there may be a link with the antimendicant cause. Thoresby is thought to have come into conflict with the friars in an attempt to seize mendicant property in 1349. In 1346 he succeeded FitzRalph as Dean of Lichfield, and was reputed to have written treatises against the friars, but the value of the evidence is to be doubted.⁵⁵ The *Memoriale Presbiterorum* deals with restitution in far more detail than manuals in the tradition established by William of Pagula's *Oculus Sacerdotis*, supplementing material from its source, Henry of Susa's *Summa Aurea*, with new material, including comments on the laxity of mendicant confessors in respect of restitution.⁵⁶

Restitution was used by the polemicists both as a focus for demands that friars should give up pastoral care and as a way of denigrating the quality of that care. This was a development of an old antifraternal topic, but in *Piers Plowman* it is turned against other priests too. Its importance seems, moreover, to have been linked with an antisacerdotal tendency in current philosophy. To assert that restitution to the victim of a crime was an essential part of the sacrament of penance was to assert that divine grace must conform with the claims of justice. Much work remains to be done in this area, but it seems that the emphasis on the claims of natural justice implicit in demands for restitution seemed to some, such as Bradwardine, unacceptably to imply a limit to God's power.⁵⁷ This philosophical problem may explain what was

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involved in FitzRalph's choice and use of the language of dominion for the conflict over pastoral care. It perhaps explains why he began his series of London Sermons with a discussion of how restitution was a principle apparent even in the passion of Christ. In the first of his series of London Sermons against the friars, delivered in December 1356, FitzRalph began his attack by arguing at length that the claims of justice for restitution in respect of injury necessitated that man's sin had to be paid for by the death of Christ incarnate, for nothing else would satisfy the requirements of justice.⁵⁸ FitzRalph seems here to have attempted to emphasise the theme of restitution as an element in the law which bound God and man. However, this should not be pressed too far, for little is known about the continuation in the later fourteenth century of the theological and philosophical debates on grace, predestination, free will and divine will, which occupied Bradwardine and his 'Pelagian' opponents in the first half of the century, although it is known that those who continued the debate included FitzRalph, Wyclif and Uthred of Boldon.⁵⁹ FitzRalph's argument in the First London Sermon had already been used in his earlier writings, for example Sermon 25, delivered in December 1346.⁶⁰ At this period he was engaged with the completion of his *Summa de Questionibus Armenorum*, in which he dealt both with the theological issues of grace, predestination and free will and the questions of ecclesiastical jurisdiction and priestly power. He had dealt even earlier with some of these questions in his *Commentary on the Sentences* (c.1327). But the relationship between this work and the theological debates of the period, and with FitzRalph's subsequent work against the friars, remains unclear.⁶¹

The language of debt and restitution provided images for both friars and penitents. The claims of justice were denied when a friar exercised pastoral care, not simply because he had coveted and sinfully procured his office, but because his exercise of that office brought penitents into debt:

Non concupisces rem proximi tui.

And yuele is pis yholde in parisshe of Engelonde,
For persons and parisshe preestes pat sholde pe peple shryue
Ben Curatours called to knowe and to hele,
Alle pat ben hir parisshe penaunce enioigne,
And [be] ashamed in hir shrift; ac shame makep hem wende
And fleen to pe freres, as fals folk to westmynstre
That borwep and berep it pider and panne biddep frendes
Yerne of forzifnesse or lenger yeres loone.
Ac while he is in westmynstre he wol be bfore
And maken hym murie wip ooper mennes goodes.
And so it farep with muche folk pat to freres shryuep,
As sisours and executours; pei [shul] 3yue pe freres
A parcel to preye for hem and [pleye] wip pe remenaunt,
And suffre pe dede in dette to pe day of doome. (B xx 279–93)

In this passage the language of debt is extended to the old 'proprius sacerdos' theme. Here penitents who fail to make restitution, such as false jurors and executors, are both examples and images of all the friars' penitents who, because they are shriven by friars, remain in debt. Friars' penitents are

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compared with plaintiffs who borrow in order to delay the process of human justice, requiring 'lenger yeres loone'; just so justice is disrupted when penitents turn from their parish priests to friar-confessors. The friars disrupt relationships of obligation and payment between penitent, parish priest and God. Insisting on the claims of justice in this way was potentially anti-sacerdotal, since it implied a limit to the priest's power, for even if properly administered by him the sacrament was not effective without restitution to the victim of the crime. Used in this way, however, the argument had the virtue for antifraternal polemicists of linking the temporal and spiritual dangers of the friars' pastoral care. The seculars linked difficulties in exacting tithes with the friars' laxity in enforcing restitution and willingness to accept alms from those who had not made restitution, asserting that in this way friars connived with, and profited from, bad tithe-payers. In the *Defensio Curatorum*, for example, FitzRalph complained that friar-confessors did not enforce this obligation on penitents.⁶² Payments to the friars in the form of almsgiving might therefore be represented as a failure by penitents to make restitution, as well as by friars. For example, in a sermon delivered to the Carmelite friars in 1349, FitzRalph argued that restitution was always essential for those who seized the goods of others, in so far as it was possible. He used the 'non dimittitur' maxim as his authority, and added that no penances, such as almsgiving, could be a substitute for restitution.⁶³ The author of the *Memoriale Presbiterorum* dealt at some length with the theme that ill-gotten gains should be restored to their rightful owner and not used for alms.⁶⁴ In Coueitise's confession in *Piers Plowman* the notion that the friars' practice of pastoral care further implicated the friars in sinful civil lordship is suggested through a link between restitution and the friars' wealth. Repentance implies that friars use their profits for rich clothing, for maintaining their fine churches and building up their large stock of books:

For were I frere of pat hous per good feip and charite is
I nolde cope vs wip pi catel ne oure kirk amende
Ne haue a peny to my pitaunce, [for pyne of my soule],
For pe beste book in oure hous, pei3 brent gold were pe leues ...

(B v 265-8)

In antifraternal polemic of the later fourteenth century these topics had become ways of showing that the friars had property interests, as will be illustrated in more detail below. It is characteristic of this polemic that they should be linked here with the question of the mendicants' pastoral activity. Here it is suggested that friars become rich because they are lax about demanding restitution of their penitents, and are willing to receive alms from the profits of crime which should be repaid to the victims.⁶⁵ Similarly, the C-text revision of the encounter in B xi between the Dreamer and a friar-confessor satirically alludes to the view that friars encourage almsgiving to themselves at the expense of restitution:

And flittyng fond y the frere pat me confessede
And saide he myhte nat me assoile but y suluer hadde
To restitue resonably for al vnrihtfole wynnyngne.

(C xii 15-17)

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If penitents who confessed to friars were debtors, then their confessors, who further deepened their debt of sin, might be considered usurers. There is evidence that FitzRalph developed this theme as a part of his antifraternal polemic, and therefore good reason for thinking that the treatment of usury in the Coueitise sequence is a development of another aspect of FitzRalph's antifraternal polemic. Like the 'theft and restitution' theme, usury has not previously been considered an integral part of FitzRalph's polemic. However, it is not until the *proposicio Unusquisque* of 1350 that the theme of restitution first has clear antifraternal significance. But here FitzRalph refers to his many previous public statements of his views, suggesting, perhaps, that in the records of the earlier sermons, which are often merely notes, the full development of the argument's antifraternal significance was implied but not recorded. The probability of a similar explanation for the usury theme is supported by the many examples of the exploitation of the theme of restitution for usurers for anticlerical purposes of various other kinds, before the advent of the friars, by such writers as Peter Cantor, and later by antifraternal writers, which establish the existence of a tradition.⁶⁶ It may be, therefore, that FitzRalph's frequent castigation of usurers would always have been readily understood to have a relevance for the friars. In a sermon of 1355, for example, he grouped those who received the profits of theft with usurers, thieves and liars as the devil's toll-collectors.⁶⁷ In another, undated, sermon he warned that those confessors who absolved usurers without demanding restitution were themselves implicated in the crime.⁶⁸ In *Piers Plowman* an anticlerical development of this antifraternal language is apparent: antifraternal still, but with its implications for other priests brought out too. This is clear from the treatment of the usury theme in Repentance's speech, especially (typically) in the C-text revision where Repentance warns that any priest who knowingly accepts tithes from ill-gotten gains can discover from the gloss of Ps. 51:8 'witterly what vsure is to mene' (C vi 304).⁶⁹ A priest who increases the penitent's debt of sin becomes both debtor and usurer. Thus here the language of usury and restitution is applied to the secular cleric. A priest who does not demand restitution perpetuates and increases the penitent's debt of sin, and himself becomes a party to it. He will be obliged to repay when the time comes for rendering account, soul for soul, at the last judgement.⁷⁰

This example is typical of how in *Piers Plowman* the reference of the polemical language is often wider, and its implications more developed, than in FitzRalph's writings. What in FitzRalph's polemics was a language for addressing the limited problem of the friars' dominion became a language in which the dominion of all clerics might be discussed, when later political developments made this the more pressing question. Notions of theft and ill-gotten gains, for example, were applicable to all clerical dominion over temporalities; notions of the responsibilities of lay almsgivers and tithe-payers might be applied to the question of the proper relationship between church and state. A fuller account of these aspects of the new anticlericalism will be reserved for the following chapters, but two aspects of the restitution

theme remain to be discussed here which neatly illustrate how this issue was to be linked with the anticlerical concerns which had become urgent issues when crown, papacy and laity all began to look hard in the direction of clerical wealth. The first of these is the antipapal dimension of the restitution theme in *Piers Plowman*. In B xix it is clear that the power of the keys is given to St Peter, and that a precondition for access to this power is 'pay back what you owe', '*redde quod debes*' (Matt. 18:28), which was the position FitzRalph took, but the only clear inheritor of this power is the mysterious Piers Plowman.⁷¹ Significantly, the meaning of one '*redde quod debes*' passage for one medieval annotator was 'de restitucione'.⁷² Although FitzRalph seems to have been anxious to avoid John de Pouilli's heresy about the limits of papal power, the theory of dominion which he used against the friars had earlier been used to explore the question of papal power. FitzRalph had borrowed the theory of dominion from political theorists who had developed it to explore papal dominion, and transferred it to the question of the friars, but for later disputants such as Wyclif, Adam Easton and Uthred of Boldon, the question of papal power was again a lively issue. Political attitudes towards the papacy shifted after FitzRalph's death, and it seems that perhaps little more than ten years later the question of the temporal and spiritual dominion of the pope and his relations with the secular state became an element in discussions of clerical dominion. In *Piers Plowman* use of the same language for the questions of papal power and the friars' pastoral powers implies a relation between the two issues.

In the same way, the implications for the role of the crown of the restitution theme, and of the issue of priestly power, are developed in the poem. A unification of these themes is apparent in B xvii, where the Samaritan explains to the Dreamer that the king and God alike are held to fulfil the '*non dimittitur*' maxim by requiring restitution in order that justice may be reconciled with mercy.⁷³ The implications of this for the power of the crown over the clergy are suggested by the reference in B xx to Westminster as a sanctuary for debtors (in the passage quoted above). Here, this is an image for the false sanctuary found by penitents who confess to friars and remain in the debt of sin. The choice of this image links the issue of priestly power with the questions of justice and clerical dominion over temporalities. It has been noted in connection with this *Piers Plowman* allusion that Westminster Abbey was a site of sanctuary for debtors, and as such was associated with injustice during 1377 and 1378.⁷⁴ It is important to note further that this was the scandal of the Haulay and Shakyl affair, which turned on the resistance of clerics to the claims of the king's justice. In the *Anonimale Chronicle* for this date (under 1378) it is noted that the abbot protected debtors against the claims of the king. The chronicler associates this matter with the contemporary debate about justice and mercy. Wyclif's teachings are cited as support for the king's cause, for according to the chronicler Wyclif argued that restitution was essential; the king could rightfully override sanctuary, for even God could not dispense from debt.⁷⁵ Wyclif, it will be remembered, had defended the crown's part in the affair at a

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parliament at Gloucester in October 1378. The issue was particularly sensitive, because the government hoped to negotiate a subsidy. Contemporary perception of a link between the controversy over priestly power and that concerning the dominion of lay authorities over clerical temporalities is also suggested by the polemical use of Exod. 20:17 at this time. Details of this issue are recorded in Wyclif's *De Civili Dominio*.⁷⁶ Wyclif noted that an objection to his argument for clerical disendowment had been based on Exod. 20:17 by a Benedictine monk at Oxford (this may have been Uthred of Boldon).⁷⁷ The monk had argued that deprivation of clerical temporalities by lay lords was contrary to Exod. 20:17; it was not merely to covet, but to steal those temporalities. Clearly, the arguments, authority and language earlier used for the friars' priestly power were here cunningly turned back on the anticlericals by the monk.⁷⁸

It is arguable that such developments of the restitution theme are apparent in anticlerical passages interpolated in the Westminster sequences early in the poem. Such is the case with the encounter between Mede and the friar, which will be discussed in more detail in the next section of this chapter, and some antifraternal passages unique to MS Bodley 851, edited as the Z Version of *Piers Plowman*, on the basis that it may represent a version of the poem anterior to the A-text. One of these interpolations is particularly noteworthy because it probably includes an allusion to Richard FitzRalph. Here, it seems, FitzRalph is cited as an authority against friar-confessors who disrupt the king's justice:

'... For [*n*]ullum malum the man mette erit *inpunitum*
Ant *nullum bonum* the bolde be *irremuneratum*.
Lat thy confessor, syre kyng, kenne the thys [on] Englis,
Ant yf ye wyrcheth in dede, Y wedde myn eyes
That lawe schal be a laborer ant lede a feld donge
Ant Loue schal lede the as the lef lycuht.'
Clerkus that were confessores coupled hem togyderes,
For to construe thys clause declined faste.
Ac to Resoun among tho r[e]nkus haued yrehered this wordus,
There nas man in the mote, more ne lasse,
That ne held Mekenesse a mayster ant Mede a muche wrech,
Ant sworn be seynt Rycher a schent the rewme. (Z IV 141-52)⁷⁹

The line 'Ant sworn be seynt Rycher a schent the rewme' occurs only in Bodley 851, according to the edition of this manuscript. It is probable that this is an allusion to Richard FitzRalph. Such an explanation would make better sense of the line than the two other possibilities, that it refers to Richard of Chichester, and that it is a pun on 'rich'. Richard of Chichester is the only saint who is a possible candidate for the reference, but in view of the satirical references to friar-confessors in this passage an allusion to FitzRalph would be more appropriate than an allusion to a thirteenth-century bishop and Chancellor of Oxford University who was a friend to the mendicant friars.⁸⁰ It is possible that the point of this line simply resides in a pun on 'richer', but this would only have satirical effect if spoken by Mede or one of her followers, and the word is not required for the alliteration. In addition,

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there is considerable positive evidence in support of an allusion here to FitzRalph. Richard FitzRalph was never canonised, but the tradition of his sainthood was exploited and perhaps fostered by those in sympathy with his effort against the mendicants.

Richard FitzRalph died in 1360 at Avignon. At some time between 1369 and 1379 his remains were translated by Bishop Stephen Wall to Dundalk. Soon after this event accounts of miracles at the new tomb and the cult of St Richard of Dundalk began to emerge, so that shortly after his accession to the papal throne in April 1378 Urban VI set up a commission to inquire into FitzRalph's life and miracles.⁸¹ Both Wycliffites and monks are known to have exploited the cult as a weapon against the friars. From about 1376 Wyclif began to refer frequently to 'sanctus Richardus' and 'sanctus Armachanus', for example in *De Civili Dominio* (c. 1376), as did Nicholas Hereford in his Ascension Day sermon, 1382. There are many other examples of references to 'St Richard' in English and Latin Wycliffite writings.⁸² Monks seem equally to have enjoyed the embarrassment caused to the friars by the cult. The continuator of Higden's *Polychronicon* recorded under the year 1376 the stir caused by miracles at FitzRalph's tomb. He interpreted these miracles as signs of divine favour, and recorded the rumour that the friars were discomfited: 'unde, ut dicitur, fratres se male contentos'.⁸³ The manuscript of FitzRalph's *De Pauperie Salvatoris* which Adam Easton owned, and which was made before December 1381, includes a portrait of FitzRalph in which he is pictured writing 'Sanctissimo' on a book, and on the same page there are pictures of friars of the four orders in the grasp of devils.⁸⁴ The alliterative stress on the word 'seynt' in the Bodley 851 line would appropriately point up this satirical exploitation of the cult. In addition, the period of the cult and of its polemical and satirical exploitation is quite consistent with the proposed date for the production of that part of Bodley 851 which contains the Z-text, which is placed in the period about or before 1376 to 1388.⁸⁵ If the identification of the owner and possible scribe of the manuscript with John Wells, Benedictine monk and friend of Adam Easton, is correct, it might be expected that he would have enjoyed the allusion.⁸⁶

FROM 'SIRE *PENETRANS DOMOS*' TO 'PE FRERE ... FLITTYNGE ... AYEINS OURE FIRSTE FORWARD'

If antifraternalism in *Piers Plowman* had a new theoretical basis, a new vocabulary and a new anticlerical context, then the traditions of the old satire against friar-confessors can hardly have remained unmodified. Where critics have identified 'tradition', we must ask how tradition has been used. How are friar-confessors characteristically treated in *Piers Plowman*? This chapter began with the observation that the traditional powers of the *penetrantes domos* were much diminished in the poem. What, if anything, could be salvaged from the tradition for the new anticlericalism?

The encounter between the Dreamer and the friar-confessor illustrates well the transformations generated by the new anticlericalism:

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And po fond I pe frere afered and flittyng bope
 Ayeins oure firste forward, for I seide I nolde
 Be buried at hire hous but at my parisshe chirche;
 For I herde ones how Conscience it tolde,
 [At kirke] pere a man were cristned by kynde he sholde be buried.
 And for I seide pus to freres a fool pei me helden,
 And loued me pe lasse for my lele speche.
 Ac yet I cryde on my Confessour pat [so konnyng heeld hym]:
 'By my feip! frere', quod I, 'ye faren lik pise woweris
 That wedde none widwes but for to welden hir goodes.
 Riȝt so, by pe roode! rouȝte ye neuere
 Where my body were buried by so ye hadde my siluer.
 I haue muche merueille of yow, and so hap many anoper,
 Whi youre Couent coueitep to confesse and to burye
 Raper pan to baptize barnes pat ben Catecumelynges. . .' (B xi 63-77)

This can hardly be said to illustrate the seduction of the Dreamer away from his parish confessor, an intrusion into conscience or the illicit use of priestly power. There is a new emphasis here, a revision of perspective, a change of focus. In the old satire encounters with penitents were characterised by the *penetrans domos* metaphor, but here the controlling metaphor is that of the transaction. This was a fitting transformation when priestly power was discussed in terms of civil lordship, and the language of restitution and debt.

The detail here of an agreement ('forward') between the Dreamer and the friar-confessor is characteristic of the new metaphor. The Dreamer has made an agreement with the friar; in return for easy absolution, he has promised to be buried at their church. FitzRalph made such agreements officially an issue in his *libellus Coram Vobis*, castigating friars who encouraged parishioners to commit themselves to burial with oaths and vows ('cum iuramentis et vocis').⁸⁷ In *Piers Plowman* the Dreamer has evidently changed his mind about burial with the friars since 'oure firste forward', much to their distress and, amusingly, the friar too is 'flittyng', once his prospects of profit disappear. In the *Defensio Curatorum* FitzRalph asserted that friars who obtained vows and counselled against a change of mind – as it was commonly said they did – acted illegally, and for this reason their church might be interdicted; it was safer therefore for parishioners to choose their parish church:

. . . pei schul nouȝt counseil no man to swere neper to make avowe; noper to plizt his
 trupe, noper to behote in oper manere wise to chese buriyng place at her chirche; so
 pat ȝif pei counseilep perto eny maner wise, her chirche is entredited, & her chirche
 heye. Oper ȝif pei counseilep hym, pat hap y-chose his buriels among hem, nouȝt to
 chaunge his wille; & comynliche it is seide pat freres counseilep so men; panne a
 parischon may verreilich haue suspicioun pat her place is entredited.⁸⁸

In accordance with the new approach, therefore, the metaphor of this encounter is that of a transaction. The old metaphor of lechery dwindles to the comparison with the mercenary suitor ('ye faren lik pise woweris That wedde none widwes but for to welden hir goodes'). There is a new emphasis on the other, financial, implications of the relationship between confessor and penitent.

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The emphasis on burial is part of the shift of focus. Although burial with the friars formed a theme in earlier stages of the conflict, it became much more important in later fourteenth-century writings. Burial was not central to the arguments of the earlier polemicists because, however much the issue irked them, as burial was not itself a sacrament it was not relevant to their main argument about the sources of the friars' pastoral powers. But when, in the later fourteenth century, pastoral care began to be considered in relation to civil dominion, especially property rights, then burial became an important issue because it constituted a source of income, and could therefore be linked with other kinds of payment to the clergy, such as almsgiving and tithes. The idea that burial at the parish church was an obligation for parishioners was characteristic of FitzRalph's treatment of the subject. In *Unusquisque* he asserted the natural and legal rightness of this arrangement: natural law requires that a son should be buried with his parents, from whose bodies he came; where the sacraments are received parishioners should be buried, by the claims of justice ('iusticia exigente'); on the basis of 1 Cor. 9:11, those who sow spiritual things should reap carnal things, in exchange for the spiritual goods given.⁸⁹ Friars, however, seek profit rather than exchange; like the Dreamer, FitzRalph wonders why friars do not seek to administer the unprofitable sacraments of baptism and extreme unction, and why they do not seek to bury the poor.⁹⁰ In the Fourth London Sermon FitzRalph used the apparent profit motive as proof that friars had acquired pastoral privileges sinfully, and were retaining them sinfully:

... ipsa potius quam priuilegia ministracionis eukaristie, siue baptismi, siue vnctionis extreme, quibus comoda temporalia nulla aut per modica sunt annexa, fuerant a fratribus procurata.⁹¹

(... those privileges were obtained by friars rather than the privileges of administering the eucharist, or baptism, or extreme unction, in which there is little or no material profit.)

FitzRalph, of course, used the topic to defend the rights of the parish clergy. But in the *Piers Plowman* example we may observe revisions which develop its anticlerical potential. In the B-text the Dreamer asserts that in exchange for receiving baptism, it is naturally just (it accords with 'kynde') to repay by being buried (and leaving any wealth) at the same church. This is favourable to the parish clergy, a bias emphasised by a B-text line printed by Skeat: 'Or where he were parisshe ne riȝt there he shulde be grauen' (Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, B xi 67). But in the C-text revision here, there is an emphasis on the restitution theme, and this passage which might be considered favourable to the parish clergy is cut; thus the passage is revised in accordance with an anticlerical viewpoint.⁹²

A similar transformation of the old metaphor is to be detected in the treatment of both Mede's confessor and Sire *Penetrans domos*. We might have expected the encounter between the confessor 'coped as a frere' and the fine lady Mede to have been treated as a seduction, but here too the new 'transaction' metaphor is apparent.⁹³ The friar is to absolve lecherous

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penitents in return for a gift of fine buildings; thus again lechery takes second place to the suggestion that pastoral care implicates the friar in sinful lordship. Such an involvement is also suggested by the use of 'brocour' in the B-text for his role as corrupter of the consciences of clerics and knights:

Tolde hym a tale and took hym a noble
For to ben hire bedeman and hire brocour als.

(Schmidt, *B-Text*, III 45-6)⁹⁴

With Chaucer's Friar Huberd lechery similarly takes second place to the 'transaction':

He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge wommen at his owene cost.⁹⁵

Also comparable is the treatment of Friar John in the *Summoner's Tale*, for this confessor is more intent on the agreement made with his penitent than on his penitent's wife. In the *Piers Plowman* example, furthermore, Mede is not simply a female victim of a *penetrans domos*, but the principle by which, in this allegory, law is corrupted and justice obstructed. The transaction metaphor is therefore emphasised in this context and is a further example of that unification between the friar problem and larger questions of justice. A similar case may be made for the treatment of Sire *Penetrans domos* in the final passus. Again, lechery is not the dominant metaphor, but merely a secondary element here. As in the Mede example, lechery is displaced into the penitent ('Sire leef-to-lyue-in-lecherie lay pere and groned') (B xx 311). The 'evil physician' metaphor is important, but not much is made of the physician/lecher pun on 'leche'. Although Pees remembers one limiter who 'saluede so oure wommen til some were wip childe' (B xx 347), this too is part of the new approach to the 'proprius sacerdos' question. Pees remarks that this was 'my lordes leche and my ladies bope' (B xx 345), playing on the current concern that husband and wife should be shriven by the same confessor.⁹⁶ FitzRalph (using the physician metaphor) treated this requirement as part of the superior safety of confession within the parish.⁹⁷ (This may account for a divergence between the French text of the *Roman de la Rose* and the fourteenth-century English translation; where the French treats of shrift of 'Touz li mondes', the English has 'husbonde and wyfe'.⁹⁸) It has already been mentioned that in Huntington Library HM 143 'sire *Penetrans domos*' has been annotated by a medieval reader 'a general name for a frere'. Other aspects of the treatment here of the friar confirm the impression given by this annotation that the old meaning of the metaphor was no longer important, and that the old metaphor had given way to a new metaphor.

In the final passus the new metaphor is apparent in Conscience's address of welcome to the friars. The themes here of 'coveting cure', of restitution and debt, already noted, are associated with the transformation of the old topic that friars were 'without number'.⁹⁹ The theme of a numbered priesthood was used by William of St Amour in his *De Periculis*, in connection with his argument that priestly authority lay inalienably with the secular clergy. The

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notion of limitation was figured by the precise number of the twelve apostles and seventy-two disciples, whose authority bishops and parish priests had inherited. Thus the priesthood was to be distinguished fundamentally from the inferior status of '*Regulares*' or '*Monachi*'. This harmony reflected the heavenly harmony, and was instituted irrevocably, beyond the power of any mortal, even the pope, to change it.¹⁰⁰ He contrasted the harmonious order of the ecclesiastical hierarchy with the perils which issued from the multitude of false prophets predicted in Matt. 24:11 for the last days; these were figures of false preachers, not sent for or called by God.¹⁰¹ A minor part of this argument was that a proliferation of preachers was burdensome to the laity, since, on the basis of 1 Cor. 9:14 ('those who preach the Gospel should earn their living by the Gospel'), preaching friars required support from parishioners who already paid tithes for the support of a parish priest.¹⁰² It was to this minor part of William's argument that the 'out of number' image was brought by anticlericals in the later fourteenth century. Whereas William of St Amour had used the topic primarily as an image to challenge the juridical authority of the friars' pastoral privileges, now the friars' opponents used the topic literally, to support their argument that the friars' privileges involved an illicit assertion of lordship. The adaptation of the 'number' theme in *Piers Plowman* is characteristic of its treatment by the friars' opponents in this period. An allusion to Wisd. 11:20 ('thou hast ordered all things by measure and number and weight') is used to support the view that the laws of nature and of scripture are transgressed by the friars' cure:

And if ye coueite cure, kynde wol yow [telle]
That in mesure god made alle manere pynges,
And sette [it] at a certain and [at] a siker nombre. (B xx 253-5)

The term 'wage' is used, neatly and satirically suggesting how cure for the friars blurs the distinction between mendicant and possessor. Where William of St Amour sought a principle of order in the heavenly hierarchy, in *Piers Plowman* the principle is derived from examples among human society, and is apparent to natural reason:

'... Of lewed and of lered the lawe wole and asketh
A certain for a certain – save oonliche of freres!
Forthi,' quod Conscience, 'by Crist! kynde wit me telleth
It is wikked to wage yow – ye wexen out of noumbre!...' (Schmidt, *B-Text*, xx 266-9)¹⁰³

The examples given are from both secular and religious life; kings and knights have a limited number of officers; there is a similar limit on numbers of nuns and monks who may be supported.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, FitzRalph associated the 'number' theme with Wisd. 11:20 showing how the friars' cure transgressed the 'lawe of kynde' and of 'Holy Writ' (in Trevisa's translation) by burdening both clergy and people:

Pe filosofer in his secunde book *de anima* seip pat pe worst pat is in kynde is passyng resoun of gretenesse & of encresinge. Panne it folewip pat pei holdip nouzt pe lawe of kynde but forsakip hit, for pei wexip grete & encresip wip-oute eny ende. Also Holy

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Writ techip vs, Sapiencie xi cº, pat God made & ordeyned al in mesure, noumbre, & wízt. But sich multiplicacioun y-founded vppon beggyng & beggerye, as freres tellep, may nouzt ordeyne a certeyn noumbre of persones pat pei schulde fynde, noper pei mowe of certein oon person fynde . . . Panne hit folewip pat pese of pe ordres of beggers multepliep hem in pis maner azenus pe ordenaunce of God Almy3tyes witt & his wisdom, and bynymep perby pe fleece of pe peple & of pe clergie, & chargip hem in euerech place.¹⁰⁵

The Dominican friar Barthelemy of Bolsenheim took this text as the theme for the prologue of his *Defensorium* of 1360, his reply to FitzRalph's *Defensio Curatorum*. He tried to return the dispute to its old basis as an essentially juridical question; thus he used Wisd. 11:20 to argue that the establishment of the mendicant orders was in harmony with all creation, and defended the friars' pastoral care on the basis of the legislative position, accusing FitzRalph of repeating John de Pouilli's errors.¹⁰⁶ The contrast between the limited number of monks and the limitless number of friars was made by the Benedictine monk Uthred of Boldon in his *quaestio Utrum Paupertas Mendicitatis*. He argued that seculars and regulars should work manually, rather than burden the laity by begging, but in the case of regular possessioners, a limit on numbers guaranteed that the monasteries' goods would suffice.¹⁰⁷

Traditionally, satire against friar-confessors had been a defence of parish priests, but anticlerical revisions of the old tradition produced a satire which defended no priests of any kind. The transformed satire potentially had implications for all priests. Sometimes these implications are developed in *Piers Plowman*. We find that the transformed satire is turned against other kinds of priest. We even find it associated with forms of antisacerdotalism. We have already seen how Wrape's satire is an attack on both friars and parish priests. The way Sire *Penetrans domos* obtains licence to act as a priest is another example:

The frere herof herde and hiede faste
To a lord for a lettre leue to haue
To curen as a Curatour; and cam with hi[s] lettr[e]
Boldely to pe bisshop and his brief hadde
In contrees per he coome confessions to here . . . (B xx 324–8)

The issuing of licences to friars was an old grievance brought back into prominence by FitzRalph's new approach. The issuing of licences by prelates was considered by certain secular clerics to be an infringement of priestly power. This is clear from FitzRalph's interpretation of 'prelati' in *Super Cathedram* as including all the pastoral clergy. A biblical text quoted by Anima, 'Nolite mittere falsem in messem alienam' (Deut. 23:25; B xv 530a), had been important in thirteenth-century debates over the relative powers of bishop and parish priest. William of St Amour had used Deut. 23:25 against friars. The *Glossa Ordinaria* interpreted the admonition not to thrust a sickle into another's corn as an instruction to bishops not to interfere with the affairs of another's church. William argued that what was not permissible for

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bishops was even less permissible for friars.¹⁰⁸ Later in the century, the text was again used antifraternally, but this time to support the authority of the parish priest against that of superiors who might license friars. Some seculars argued that permission to hear confession should be granted by the parish priest, and only if the priest maliciously refused it could his superior overrule him.¹⁰⁹ This view met with resistance. In England in 1287, Archbishop John Pecham wrote to the Deacon of St Paul's denouncing those who maintained that the parish priest's licence was required for friars to hear confession, and commanding friars' true powers to be announced publicly.¹¹⁰ In the later fourteenth century FitzRalph and Conway took up this matter; FitzRalph used the 'prelati' argument, while Conway maintained that a general licence from a bishop was sufficient authorisation.¹¹¹ FitzRalph's patron, John Grandisson, Bishop of Exeter, who had been a student in Paris at the time of the John de Pouilli controversy, also seems to have taken a line more favourable to the parish priest than the official one. An entry in his register for 1351 warns against false friars who, under the pallium of alleged papal privileges, hear confessions against the will of curates.¹¹² The *Piers Plowman* example in B xx shares with these cases the suggestion that the friar licensed by the bishop obtains cure sinfully (in a transaction with a secular lord) but does not affirm the rights of the rival parish priest. In the example from Anima's speech Deut. 23:25 is no longer used antifraternally, but as a shaft against *prelates* who 'crepe [in] amonges curatours, confessen ageyn pe lawe' (B xv 530).¹¹³

Revisions of the old satire in *Piers Plowman* are sometimes associated with antisacerdotalism, that is to say, with ideas which undermine the very office of priest. We have already seen that the restitution theme called into question the priest's part in the sacrament of penance. The most notably antisacerdotal aspect of the confessor sequences is the emphasis on contrition. Although 'contrition' is frequently collocated with 'confession' in the final two passus, it is Contricion who is the friar's victim.¹¹⁴ In the B-text version of the encounter between the Dreamer and a friar-confessor, the Dreamer jibes that the element of contrition makes oral confession (to a priest) unnecessary claiming:

For a baptized man may, as maistres tellep,
Thoruz contricion [clene] come to pe heize heuene ... (B xi 80-1)

He suggests to Scripture that Contricion may:

... crye by his lyue
Mercy for hise mysdedes wip moupe [or] wip herte. (B xi 135-6)

But such extremism is not found in all manuscripts. Some B-text manuscripts and the C-text emphasise the importance of oral confession: B-text manuscripts W, Hm and F read 'and' at B xi 136 – heart *and* mouth cry for mercy – while C xii 68 (B xi 135) has 'Bote yf contricioun and confessioun crye by his lyue', and B xi 80-1 are omitted from the C-text. An emphasis on contrition

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seems originally to have been part of the restitution theme in antifraternel writings. Restitution was considered to be a sign of contrition, without which there could be no absolution. This was frequently a theme of FitzRalph's writings:

... non est contricio nisi precedat restitucio (si assit facultas, aut saltem vera voluntas restituendi cum poterit si desit facultas); non enim potest homo penitere quod alium decepit et eius bona sic habuit ...¹¹⁵

(... there is no contrition unless restitution precedes it (if there are sufficient means, or if the means are lacking, a genuine desire for restitution when possible); for a man cannot repent for having deceived another and thus still have his goods ...)

The idea is the basis of a witty passage in Chaucer's portrait of Friar Huberd, for whom alms are a sufficient sign of contrition:

For unto a povre ordre for to yive
Is signe that a man is wel yshryve;
For if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,
He wiste that a man was repentaunt;
For many a man so hard is of his herte,
He may nat wepe, althogh hym soore smerte.
Therefore in stede of wepyng and preyes
Men moote yeve silver to the povre freres.¹¹⁶

As with the emphasis on restitution itself, this notion was potentially antisacerdotal. It was an orthodox belief that in some cases contrition alone sufficed for absolution from sin, but the theme's antisacerdotal potential emerged later.¹¹⁷ Omission of such assertions in the C-text may indicate a response to the doctrinal implications, as for example the Dreamer's citation of '*Sola contricio [delet peccatum]*' (B xi 81a) and Pience's assertion that 'contricion ... dryueþ away dedly synne and doop it to be venial' (B xiv 83-4), both likewise omitted in the C-text.¹¹⁸

The transformation of the old *penetrantes domos* metaphor, therefore, is in *Piers Plowman* not an alternative way of defending the parish priest. It is part of a new satire which does not put forward the interests of the parish clergy, or of any clerics. At its most extreme, it calls into question the authority of any priest. Sire *Penetrans domos* is no longer a usurper of another cleric's rightful role. Conscience may advocate a preference for 'persons and parisshe preestes' (B xx 281), and assert that no friar could be a 'bette leche' (B xx 318), but with the loss of the friar's pseudo-priestly powers, the powers of other priests are often diminished too. Accordingly, the final crisis of the poem takes place not in 'parisshe of Englonde' (B xx 280) but in a Unity presided over by Conscience, where the friar usurps not the role of a parish priest, but that of the sacrament ('Shrift shoop sharp salve ...') (B xx 306). Here the victim is not a penitent, but Contricion, conscience's part in the sacrament. Sire *Penetrans domos* finds Unity unguarded by Clergie. Conscience cries a second time for the help of Clergie to defend Unity, but it is Contricion he calls on to keep the gate.

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'CLERGIE' AND CONSCIENCE

Conscience cryed eft [Clergie to helpe],
And [bad] Contricion [come] to kepe pe yate.
'He lyp [adreynt] and dremep', seide Pees, 'and so do manye opere.
The frere wip his phisyk pis folk hap enchaunted,
And [dop men drynke dwale]; pei drede no synne.'
'By crist!' quod Conscience po, 'I wole bicom a pilgrym,
And [wenden] as wide as pe world [rennep]
To seken Piers pe Plowman, pat pryde [myzte] destruye,
And pat freres hadde a fyndyng pat for nede flateren
And countrepledep me, Conscience; now kynde me avenge,
And sende me hap and heele til I haue Piers pe Plowman.'
And sippe he gradde after Grace til I gan awake. (B xx 375-86)

Just as Clergie does not defend Conscience against Sire *Penetrans domos*, so Clergie does not prepare Conscience to receive Grace. Contricion's dreaming sleep is not broken by Clergie. The end of *reading*, rather, is the end of dreaming; and the point at which Conscience cries out for Grace. The closing lines of the poem suggest something of the wider implications of the absorption of the old satire into *Piers Plowman*. Here, preparation for and access to saving grace is enabled less by that 'clergie' from which priests are drawn, than by that 'clergie' which is reading and writing. It is telling, therefore, that it is at the end of reading when the sleeper is awakened, and when Conscience is stirred to cry after Grace.

A fracture between 'clergie' and the clergy in this period was, of course, not simply a consequence of anticlericalism, nor can the relation between the two be easily defined, for the subject of lay literacy is vast and complex. Yet it is necessary to tackle a part of this relationship, albeit tentatively, for 'clergie' was part of the issue of priestly power.

Clerical learning had, of course, long been associated with the issue of pastoral care, and the association had already had far-reaching consequences for English literature (the most famous piece of evidence for this is of course King Alfred's Preface to Gregory the Great's *Cura Pastoralis*). With the Fourth Lateran Council, however, the matter became closely linked with priestly power. The reform movement emphasised the importance of clerical learning for the administration by priests of the sacraments. The decree *Omnis Utriusque Sexus* required priests to be sufficiently learned to examine and instruct penitents properly.¹¹⁹ Accordingly, learning and ignorance among those engaged in pastoral work were themes of major importance in the conflict over pastoral care. To the claim that they were too numerous to fit into the system of pastoral care, the friars traditionally replied that, on the contrary, they were necessary to supplement the deficiencies of the secular clergy. Just so, in *Piers Plowman* it is friars who respond to Conscience's first cry for help, when the deficiencies of the seculars are discovered:

Conscience cryede, 'help, Clergie or I falle
Thoruz inparfite preestes and prelates of holy chirche.'

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Freres herden hym crye and comen hym to helpe,
Ac for pei koupe noȝt wel hir craft Conscience forsook hem.

(B xx 228–31)

In *Contra Impugnantes* Thomas Aquinas wrote of the danger of ignorant preachers and confessors, and of the difficulty of finding enough learned priests to carry out the programme of the Fourth Lateran Council.¹²⁰ The Minorite friar John Pecham, Archbishop of Canterbury, defended the rights of the friars of his order to hear confession in his letter of 1287 to the Deacon of St Paul's. Friars minor were better equipped to hear confessions than secular priests, whose simplicity did not suffice for guiding others ('quorum simplicitas non sufficit aliis dirigendis').¹²¹ This claim persisted in the later fourteenth-century phase of the conflict. In 1380 Richard Helmsley, the Dominican friar, was said to have claimed that the secular clergy were completely ignorant ('nichil scientes'), while members of his order were learned; there were eighty curates in the diocese of Durham who had cure of souls, yet not one could read from the gospel during mass without error, whereas friars were *clerics* and knew everything ('ipsi de dictis ordinibus erant clerici et sciebant omnia').¹²²

In the new anticlericalism, there is a loosening of the clerical monopoly on 'clergie'. In Ymaginatif's defence of 'clergie', clerical learning and priestly power are associated with this fracture between the clergy and 'clergie'. Ymaginatif's defence rests upon a redefinition of the word 'clergie', exploiting the several meanings of the word. The meanings of 'clergie': literacy, learning, the clergy, the 'benefit of clergy', all point to a definition of the clergy as the learned class. In Ymaginatif's defence, however, the priestly role of the clergy and the other meanings of 'clergie' are not so unambiguously and necessarily related, for here they are metaphors for one another. Writing, reading of books and the 'neck-verse' are all correlated figuratively with the priestly mediation of grace through the sacraments.¹²³ Ymaginatif's attempt to defend 'clergie' with an argument about contrition illustrates the crisis precipitated by this fracture. As Ymaginatif attempts to answer the anticlericalism of the previous passus, by determining on the questions of baptism, contrition and predestination, it is never clear which 'clergie' is being defended.

We may trace a fracture between 'clergie' and the clergy in the transformation of the old satire against friar-confessors. The treatment of clerical learning as part of the pastoral care question illustrates the kind of transformation involved. In the new anticlericalism, clerical learning was not just part of the pastoral care issue, but became linked with all aspects of clerical dominion. The new anticlericalism brought the basic principles and practices of clerical learning into question. This was in part an extension of a defensive anti-intellectualism which the secular clergy had invoked against the friars.

From the earliest stages of their conflict with the friars the seculars defended themselves against the charges of moral and intellectual deficiency

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by attacking the friars' high learning. They had at their disposal a tradition of polemic against proud, self-seeking and hypocritical university friars. The friars' supremacy in intellectual life had led to friction in the mid thirteenth century, when the secular clergy at the University of Paris tried to restrict the number of friars permitted to become regent masters, which was the status required for teachers of university students. Particularly appropriate, in view of their academic ambitions, was Matt. 23:6–7, 'they like to have places of honour at feasts and the chief seats in synagogues, to be greeted respectfully in the street, and to be addressed as "rabbi"' (translated 'master' in the later English satires). The persistence of the details and themes of this tradition in the antifraternal writings of later fourteenth-century England has been demonstrated in several studies.¹²⁴ However, the basis of the seculars' attack in the later fourteenth century was quite distinct from that of the previous century. It was characterised by new themes and detail, and by changes in the application and importance of the old texts and topics. This new approach gave it its place in the new anticlericalism. Satire against 'clergie' in *Piers Plowman* is characteristic of this later fourteenth-century English tradition.

The new approach is detectable in a document which issued from a revival of an old conflict at the time of FitzRalph's conflict with the friars. At Oxford in the middle of the fourteenth century there seems to have been a revival of a conflict which began in the previous century. Franciscan and Dominican friars were forbidden by their rules to take a degree in arts (to become masters), yet this was required by the university before inception in theology. A statute of 1358 denounced 'wax doctors' who obtained degrees by favour; in the statute this abuse is related to the popular antifraternal charge of child-stealing; children induced to join the mendicant orders, as popular talk has it ('ut populus fabulatur'), spend their time begging and currying favour with the great instead of being educated.¹²⁵ This is characteristic of how, in fourteenth-century antifraternalism, the friars' learning and the deficiencies of the parish clergy were treated as aspects of a single phenomenon, which was itself an example of how the friars had defrauded the seculars of their rights and property in the pastoral system, by sinfully asserting dominion. Thus in B XIII the attack on the Great Friar's learning is indissolubly united with the themes of his neglect of poverty and penance.

A frequent detail of the satire and polemic which epitomises this approach is that of the friars' many books. In *Piers Plowman* Repentance implies that the friars buy many expensive books with the profits from their laxity over restitution, while Clergie, the companion of the Great Doctor of theology in B XIII, has a great many books.¹²⁶ The source for this widespread tradition is almost certainly to be found in the *Defensio Curatorum*, where FitzRalph complained that friars used their profits from shrift and burial to buy up all the supply of books, to the extent that students he had sent to the university were forced to leave their studies through lack of books.¹²⁷ Ignorance among the seculars was therefore not attributable to their own moral deficiencies, but to the friars' usurpation of the seculars' rights and property, which

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included their interests in learning, here represented by the property interest of books. These associations persist in later examples, such as the *Summoner's Tale*, where friar John bewails the prospect that he might be forced to sell his books to keep up his fine buildings (the irony is double here: friars were forbidden to sell certain books), and the theme is especially common in Wycliffite writings, where FitzRalph is quoted as an authority.¹²⁸ Similarly, both students and academic degrees were treated by the friars' enemies as illicit property interests. This accounts for the importance in fourteenth-century antifraternal writings (and in the mid-century Oxford conflict) of the astonishing charge that friars 'stole' children for their orders. In the *Defensio Curatorum* FitzRalph argued that parents' fear of child-stealing had caused a decline in the education of children.¹²⁹ The 'wax-doctors' statute also shows how the old 'rabbi' topic became part of the dominion issue; master's degrees were added to the list of the friars' ill-gotten gains. This explains why the old 'rabbi' topic remained important, for claiming the status of master might be associated with the charge that the friars sinfully asserted civil dominion. This and the other topics were well suited to the new anticlerical case. Accordingly, in *Piers Plowman* the loaded term 'master' is often used anticlerically, for friars and for other learned clerics. For example, at the dinner with Conscience the Great Friar is a master who is treated like a lord:

This maister was maad sitte as for pe mooste worpi ... (B XIII 33)

Anima widens the attack to other 'masters': 'Freres and fele opere maistres' (B xv 70), and brings out its implications for clerical dominion by linking 'heigh clergie shewynge' (B xv 78) with assertions of lordship in housing and clothing.¹³⁰

For FitzRalph, the corollary of the attack on learned masters was the defence of the seculars' comparative ignorance as valuable simplicity. Again and again in his sermons, he argued that the parish priest was the better confessor, even if he was less learned than an outsider. It was not important for priests to have knowledge of such abstruse matters as the movements of the heavens and the courses of the stars; they simply had to know as much as was required for the safety of their parishioners. A simple priest, with little sophistication in letters, could be a better confessor than a master of theology. Those who had a simple understanding of the scriptures could be better at teaching the people than many doctors of theology.¹³¹ In *Piers Plowman*, by contrast, neither the treatment of clerical learning, nor that of clerical ignorance, constitutes a defence of priestly power. Rather, the new anticlerical implications of these themes are developed. This is illustrated by the attack on clerical ignorance in Anima's speech. Here the friars' evil influence on learning is associated with intellectual deficiencies in priests, in accordance with FitzRalph's treatment of the subject. But whereas FitzRalph stressed the value of the pastoral relationship between secular clergy and laity, asserting the primacy of their claim against the friars' theft of learning, here the issue of clerical ignorance is associated with antisacerdotal ideas. The laity are

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compared with those groups of people outside the church, who may be saved through faith alone, without receiving sacraments from a priest:

Grammer, pe ground of al, bigilep now children,
For is noon of pise newe clerkes, whoso nymep hede,
[That kan versifie faire ne formaliche enditen],
[Ne] nau3t oon among an hundred pat an Auctour kan construwe,
Ne rede a lettre in any langage but in latyn or englissh.
Go now to any degree, and but if gile be maister,
[And as vs her vnder hym to fourmen vs alle
Flaterere his felawe, ferly me pynkep].
Doctours of decrees and of diuinite maistres,
That sholde konne and knowe alle kynnes clergie
And answer to Argument3 and [assoile] a *Quodlibet* –
I dar no3t siggen it for shame – if swiche were apposed
Thei sholde failen of hir Philosophie and in Phisik bope.
Wherfore I am afered of folk of holy kirke,
Lest pei ouerhuppen as oopere doon in office and in houres.
[Ac] if pei ouerhuppe, as I hope no3t, oure bileue suffisep,
As clerkes in *Corpus Christi* feeste syngen and reden
That *sola fides sufficit* to saue wip lewed peple.
And so may Sarzens be saued, Scribes and [Grekes]. (B xv 372–90)

Here the attack on claims to learning – purchase of degrees, children not grounded in the arts, unqualified teachers – is associated with an attack on priestly ignorance. Neither the learned nor the ignorant are defended; instead, an antisacerdotal view of salvation is suggested. Anima asserts that salvation is independent of priestly efficacy, for even non-Christians may be saved.

Such theories arose as part of the exploration of the philosophical and theological implications of the debate about grace and justice. This context is suggested further by extra lines in some C-text manuscripts at this point, which seem to contain an allusion to one such theory put forward by the monk Uthred of Boldon:

‘... For Sarrasynes may be saued so yf they so byleued
In pe letynge of here lyf to leue on holy churche’. (C xvii 123–4)

Uthred argued that for everyone, whether Christian or not, salvation would depend upon a choice made at the moment of death. At this moment (‘In pe letynge of here lyf’, in the words of *Piers Plowman*) a ‘clear vision’ of God would be granted; those who chose God would be saved, those who rejected God would be damned.¹³² The theological sources of Uthred’s argument are unclear, but his view was associated by his opponents with Pelagianism, the heresy which exalted human actions and works as the determiners of salvation, and consequently circumscribed God’s power.¹³³ At least by the 1360s this philosophical conflict had become associated with anti-fraternalism, when the matter became an issue, alongside mendicancy and preaching, in the conflict between Uthred and the Dominican William

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Jordan.¹³⁴ It is this friar, formerly an opponent of FitzRalph, who seems to be the subject of an allusion in the antifraternat satire of B XIII.¹³⁵

There was, however, a positive counterbalance to the diminution of priestly power in the new anticlericalism. It was a counterbalance with profound literary implications. Paradoxically, in this period, as the priest lost lordship over 'clergie', so the penitent gained it. Thus the clergy failed, but conscience did not lose access to saving grace. For 'clergie' had the power to replace the priest. The fate of the literature of pastoral care offers a paradigm. Pastoral manuals such as the various forms of the *Lay Folks' Catechism*, examples of a genre originally intended to help the clergy instruct the laity, became available directly to a lay readership.¹³⁶ Now conscience might be prepared, and contrition awakened, in anyone who could read English. This might even be a medium superior to that of a clergy which was associated with the obfuscation of Christian truth. While the power of confessors was diminished in the new context, another kind of usurpation of priestly power was taking place. With the spread of devotional literacy, books intruded into private homes and the writer gained direct access to the conscience of the lay reader. Affective strategies especially could prick conscience. Thus 'clergie' may be thought of as the new usurper of priestly power.

The implications are confronted and exploited in *Piers Plowman*. The power of the confessor Sire *Penetrans domos*, and of all priests, is diminished both in and by the poem. For here, although the powers of the confessor are diminished, the sacrament of penance retains the greatest importance. The poem, as has often been remarked, is related in its concerns to the literature of pastoral care, to writings whose concern was the health of conscience, and the salvation of the soul. *Piers Plowman*, it has been remarked, is like this; its subject is penance, its strategies are affective.¹³⁷ A generic relationship with penitential literature is confirmed by medieval manuscript annotation. Alongside the response to the poem's anticlericalism, there is an alertness to moral and religious sentence. Some readers, as might be expected, show a lively response to the antifraternat satire. Thus in some manuscripts there are clusters of antifraternat notes beside the friar-confessor sequences of passus III, XI and XX.¹³⁸ Again, many medieval annotators marked the antifraternat satire of the Great Friar sequence.¹³⁹ However, annotation of the sins sequence gives some indication of another kind of reading tradition. Despite or, perhaps more accurately, concomitantly with their evidently polemical content, manuscripts of the B- and C-text versions often share with manuscripts of the less polemical A-text a tradition of marking the sins in the margin. In some manuscripts annotators have also alerted readers to the associated polemical content, with such notes as 'Ira ffreris' in Oriel 79 and Cambridge University Library Ll 4 14, or 'notate lewede prestes' in Huntington Library MS HM 143.¹⁴⁰ Tellingly, the compiler of the Vernon manuscript classified *Piers Plowman* as reading for the health of the soul, including it at the end of a list of contents classified as 'salus anime'.¹⁴¹

It is hazardous to interpret such annotations, but they seem to confirm a

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correlation between the poem's affective, penitential aspects, and its anticlericalism. Readers who were perhaps products of the new blurring between clergy and laity sought moral and religious sentence in the poem, perhaps seeing the anticlerical polemic as an adjunct, even its source of authority. Thus the annotations seem to reflect the new usurpation of priestly power. The poem took the place of the cleric, and drew its authority for this usurpation from the new anticlericalism. As the antifraternel satire of spiritual usurpation was transformed into an anticlerical satire of the theft of temporal things, so increasingly the corollary of this transformation was another kind of usurpation of the spiritual power of the clergy.

Poverty: an old controversy and a new polemic

POVERTY AND DOMINION

For [at] Caluarie of cristes blood cristendom gan sprynge,
And blody breperen we bicomme pere of o body ywonne,
As *quasi modo geniti* gentil men echone,
No beggere ne boye amonges vs but if it synne made ...

For loue lafte pei lordshipe, bope lond and scole,
Frere Fraunceys and Domynyk, for loue to be holye ...

Enuye herde pis and heet freres go to scole
And lerne logyk and lawe and ek contemplacion,
And preche men of Plato, and preue it by Seneca
That alle pynges vnder heuene ouzte to ben in comune.

(B XI 201-4; B XX 251-2, 273-6)

'Ut ... paupertatem et humilitatem et sanctum Evangelium Domini nostri Iesu Christi, quod firmiter promisimus, observemus' ('... that we may observe the poverty and humility and the holy gospel of our lord Jesus Christ, which we have firmly vowed'): the aspiration of Francis of Assisi for evangelical poverty was in itself the source of the conflicts to follow.¹ The desire to imitate the poverty of Christ and the apostles rested on untested assumptions which were to become the issues of the poverty controversies.² Just as inevitably, the poverty controversy became central to the question of clerical dominion. The foundation on apostolic principles of a religious order with a pastoral ministry had implications both for the secular clergy and for the monks, calling into question the nature and degree of power over temporalities proper to the clergy. In the new anticlericalism, poverty came to be seen as clerical renunciation of dominion, and property synonymous with the other manifestations of illicit dominion, priestly, political and intellectual. Just as the conflict over the friars' pastoral care became incorporated into the larger question of clerical dominion, so the conflict over Franciscan poverty was incorporated into the new anticlericalism.

The Franciscans' failure to fulfil the ideals of their founder is usually attributed, paradoxically, to the success of their order. Only a small number of friars could live in precarious poverty, relying solely on alms. It would be more precise to say that the growth of the order revealed clearly the true source of failure: the unresolved ambiguity on which it was founded. The

disparity between the theory and practice of poverty became more acute and obvious as the order grew, but growth only manifested a disparity which was the inevitable outcome of the ideal itself. Francis had urged literal imitation of evangelical poverty; the gospel was the Rule, and the Rule was never to be 'glossed'. The prohibition of glossing epitomises the ambiguity at the heart of the ideal. What was the nature of the poverty the gospel taught? What would count as an imitation, and what, contrastingly, would be a 'gloss'? Resolution of these matters must always precede complaints about the disparity between the ideal and the reality. The behaviour of the friars was of course subject to scrutiny, but this was always founded on the texts (the Bible, the Rule, and papal bulls) upon which the profession was based. The recurrent issues, reflecting the fundamental ambiguity, were those of language and interpretation. Interpretations were called into question, and so were the principles and practices by which those conclusions were reached. An emphasis on a simple and wholehearted response to the teaching of scripture paradoxically produced a series of conflicts which focussed on interpretations of words and texts. Such was the poverty controversy which became part of the conflict over clerical dominion in the later fourteenth century. In *Piers Plowman* may be discerned the development of an interpretation and language of poverty appropriate for the new anticlericalism.

The basis for the new anticlerical account of poverty is to be found in the antifraternal writings of Richard FitzRalph. Just as the challenge to priestly power was founded on the adaptation of antifraternal tradition, so the new account of poverty was founded on FitzRalph's antifraternalism. In part, it was a development of antimendicant polemic traditionally used by the secular clergy against the friars. Mendicancy, which gave the friars leisure to act as priests, was naturally a source of friction in the controversy over pastoral care. However, as we have seen in chapter 2, the new approach to priestly power involved consideration of the friars' claims to *poverty*, not simply their *mendicancy*. It was these claims to poverty which FitzRalph was exploiting when he used the language of possession, restitution, theft and debt for the friars' pastoral powers. His treatment of the poverty question was not simply an adaptation of the earlier position of the secular clergy, but must be considered in the wider context of the poverty controversy.

Besides being an issue in the controversy with the secular clergy, Franciscan poverty was a source of conflict with the other religious orders, and among the Franciscans themselves. The friars' ideal of evangelical poverty was incompatible with that of the older, monastic, orders, whose professions were based, theoretically, on personal but not communal poverty, and manual work rather than mendicancy. The precise interpretation of evangelical poverty led to conflicts among the various mendicant orders themselves, especially at first between the Franciscans and the Dominicans.³ Before long, the Franciscans split internally over poverty. For some it was

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sufficient to be theoretically poor, to renounce all legal dominion over property. For others evangelical poverty meant material hardship, the renunciation of all but the necessities for survival: the *usus pauper*.

FitzRalph followed the earlier antifraternal secular clergy in practice but not in theory. The outcome was a complete transformation of the place of poverty in the attack on the friars. William of St Amour, for example, had exploited the monastic theory of poverty against the friars. In this theory the gospel showed that the religious life should be one of communal property and manual labour. William characteristically stressed the distinction between the priesthood and the friars by claiming that mendicancy (which freed the friars for pastoral work) was a departure from the rule of manual labour by which the friars, as regulars, should live. FitzRalph too, in a way, accused the friars of departing from their rule, but did so from a position closer to that of the radicals within the Franciscan order. Whereas traditionally the secular clergy had exploited the monastic theory of poverty, FitzRalph accepted the Franciscan interpretation of evangelical poverty, and demanded that the friars should adhere closely to it. He broke with the traditional, condemned, position formerly held by the seculars, and with the old emphasis on the distinction between priests and regulars. In so doing, he produced a theory of poverty with the potential to challenge the dominion of all clerics. The implications of this for priestly power have been observed in chapter 2. Here the theory itself will be considered.

The notion that indigence was a consequence of sin ('No beggere ne boye amonges vs but if it synne made', B XI 204) was fundamental to the way FitzRalph and his followers exploited the friars' theory of evangelical poverty. FitzRalph's account of poverty was set out in the treatise *De Pauperie Salvatoris*; his views were also summarised and defended in his London Sermons and his *Defensio Curatorum*. The precise details of his sources and strategies are still unclear, but enough is known to suggest that, in outline, FitzRalph refashioned the Franciscan theory of poverty by combining it with the theory of dominion and grace, for which a likely source was *De Ecclesiastica Potestate* by the Austin friar Giles of Rome. Common to both theories was a distinction between the dominion over property guaranteed by human law (also termed civil, or positive, law) and that based upon non-human law, natural or divine. This account of FitzRalph's poverty theory is proposed in Dawson's important article, 'Richard FitzRalph'. It differs from previous accounts of FitzRalph's *De Pauperie Salvatoris* in emphasising the importance of the Franciscan theory of poverty as a source of FitzRalph's theory. Previous studies, assuming that FitzRalph's primary source was the Augustinian theory of dominion with grace, underemphasise and fail to explain the Franciscan element in his work, and its reception by later polemicists.⁴

The Franciscan view was developed by Bonaventure in the middle years of the thirteenth century. Bonaventure was general of the Franciscan order from 1257 to 1274, before and during which time he came into conflict with

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enemies of the friars such as William of St Amour and Gerard d'Abbeville. Against William in the mid 1250s he issued three *articuli* on evangelical poverty: 'De Paupertate quoad Abrenuntiationem', 'De Paupertate quoad Mendicitatem' and 'Utrum Pauperes Validi', a *quaestio* on manual labour. Against Gerard he issued *Apologia Pauperum* in 1269. Bonaventure's polemical writings were known in England in the following century. For example, the fourteenth-century English manuscript, Paris BN Lat. 3183, a collection of polemical material, contains the first and third *articuli*, while Richard Maidstone cited Bonaventure's *Apologia* as an authority for the friars' mendicancy.⁵ Bonaventure's theory was incorporated in the bull *Exiit qui seminat*, issued by Nicholas III in 1279.⁶

According to this theory, the Franciscans might claim to be poor because the material requirements for living were legally the property of the papacy; the friars merely had the use of them, but no property in them. This distinction was the subject of much controversy, and was challenged from both within the order and from without; the large number of polemical treatises which issued from this conflict would have provided FitzRalph with much material for developing his own argument. Those within the order who favoured a rigorous adherence to austerity, such as the Franciscan Spirituals, questioned whether the validity of Bonaventure's theoretical definition was not impugned by day-to-day practice, and argued for the more rigorous *usus pauper*, poverty of use.⁷ The theory itself was challenged by John XXII in the 1320s, when he suspended *Exiit qui seminat*, and rejected the distinction between legal possession and use.⁸ In defence of the Franciscans, Bonagratia of Bergamo argued for the distinction between legal possession and use by relating it to the distinction between human and natural law, already found in *Exiit qui seminat*.⁹ The notion of natural law was valuable for resisting erosion of the distinction between legal possession and use, because it was a law under which there was by definition no civil property; it might therefore safely be used to underpin the concept of simple use, and to contrast that with legal possession. Classic examples of use under natural law, where there was no question of legal title, were the use of light and air, and the use of another's property in cases of extreme necessity. Just so, the Franciscans claimed, they had no civil property in the goods they used. An opposite strategy lay behind the Augustinian theory of dominion and grace, but this theory too led to a definition of the scope of human law, and thus permitted FitzRalph to make a synthesis between this and the Franciscan theory. The purpose of the Austin friar Giles of Rome was to defend the supremacy of the papacy against secular authority. Accordingly, he argued that all dominion rested on divine grace, of which the earthly source was the pope. In contrast with the Franciscan theory, the consequence of his position was that through the papacy the church and all those in a state of grace corporately held dominion over all things temporal.¹⁰ The similarity with the Franciscan theory resided in the distinction between dominion based on grace, and dominion based on human law. But whereas for the Franciscans civil dominion was quite distinct from

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natural dominion, in the Augustinian theory civil dominion must be ratified by divine law.

Fundamental to FitzRalph's theory of poverty seems to have been an identification between natural law and dominion in grace. FitzRalph argued that there were two kinds of lordship held by humans: natural or original lordship, and civil, human or positive lordship. According to FitzRalph, before the fall Adam held natural or original lordship over all creation. This lordship was lost as a consequence of sin, but partially restored through grace. A consequence of the fall was the introduction of civil or positive lordship, guaranteed by civil or positive law. Since Adam had held lordship over all creation, and this state would have continued for his progeny if he had not sinned, property, individual or common, was a consequence of sin and the introduction of civil or positive law.¹¹ The state which prevailed before the fall was therefore similar to the condition which, according to the Franciscans, prevailed under natural law, and which, Bonagratia of Bergamo argued, Christ had come to renew.¹² In FitzRalph's version, however, this natural lordship was underwritten by grace. Loss of natural lordship (material hardship) was a consequence of sin, therefore, because only under civil law might there be a restriction of dominion, and indigence.¹³

Although present knowledge of the subject does not permit a detailed account, an outline of how FitzRalph's thought was developed later, and of responses to it, may be attempted. The satirical lines from the final passus of *Piers Plowman* quoted at the beginning of this chapter are characteristic of the antifraternal strategy adopted by the secular clergy which was to form the basis of the anticlerical theory of poverty, and form a good epigraph for the friars' responses. Here it is suggested that, in order to defend their pastoral role, the friars argue for *communal* dominion 'alle pynges vnder heuene ouȝte to ben in comune', while Conscience asserts that the friars' founders renounced dominion. Characteristically, here the Franciscan friars' own theory of poverty as the *absence* of dominion is made the basis of an attack on the friars' claims to a pastoral role. As we have seen in the last chapter, the friars' claim is presented as an assertion of dominion which is a transgression of the law of Exod. 20:17. This is characteristic of the way in which the seculars had attempted to undermine the friars' claims. In response the friars had to show that their claim to pastoral care was not inconsistent with their professed poverty. Studies of their polemical writings reveal three features suggestive of their strategy. Firstly, FitzRalph's polemics were perceived as a threat by all the mendicant orders, even though (as has often been noted) FitzRalph usually referred only to the Franciscan profession.¹⁴ Secondly, the friars seem characteristically to have abandoned the traditional theories of possession and poverty developed by thinkers in their orders. Walsh, for example, noted that the Austin friar Geoffrey Hardeby did not draw on the work of the major polemicists from his order, such as Giles of Rome, who flourished in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, or on works by major disputants from other orders, such as Bonaventure, Pecham and

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Aquinas.¹⁵ Catto's study of William Woodford has revealed that this Franciscan opponent of Wyclif did not follow the traditional Franciscan account of poverty, and Walsh noted that the same was true of his predecessor Roger Conway.¹⁶ Finally, the friars characteristically opposed FitzRalph and his followers collectively; for example, the four mendicant orders issued jointly the *Appellacio* against FitzRalph in 1357, and seem to have acted collectively against him at Avignon.¹⁷ This perception of the possibility of, and need for, unity seems to have persisted; the Carmelite Richard Maidstone asserted that a defence of his order constituted a defence of all four orders of friars.¹⁸ These features of the friars' response are indicative of their position in the conflict. The collective response of all the orders confirms that for FitzRalph the Franciscan theory of poverty was not simply a standard by which one order might be judged (and therefore, as has sometimes been suggested, inappropriately used against other mendicant orders) but an intellectual basis for attacking all the orders of friars.¹⁹ The friars' neglect of the work of previous apologists from their orders is symptomatic of the way in which the seculars had turned their own theories against them, forcing them to find a new theory in which pastoral care would not be incompatible with religious poverty. Their unity in this matter and their choice of a new theory of poverty are indicative of the implications the seculars' account of poverty would hold for all clerical dominion. The friars, it appears, sought refuge in the *monastic* theory of poverty with common possessions.²⁰

The doctrine of common property was, as has already been said, the basis upon which possessions were said to be held by the endowed clergy.²¹ The history of the poverty conflict from the time of FitzRalph to the time of *Piers Plowman* is complex, but it seems safe to say that active defence of their professions by the friars led both to conflict with the endowed orders, and to common cause with them against the anticlericals. The shifts in position among the clerical parties reveal the extent to which the new antifraternal interpretation of poverty provided eventually the basis for a theory of poverty appropriate to the new anticlericalism. The old conflict between the monks and the friars is in evidence in the 1360s and 1370s. Thus a monastic *quaestio* preserved with the Monk of Bury's Treatise (which dates from the 1360s or earlier) asked whether poverty with communal possession of necessities was more perfect than poverty with mendicancy. Again, the two Austin friars who argued the anticlerical case in a parliament of 1371 (John Bankyn and, probably, Thomas Ashbourne) urged that the crown might take the possessioners' wealth to pay for the defence of the realm, since under divine and natural law all things were in common to all: 'Car la lei de deu et de nature voelt expressement qe totes possessions si bien de clergie come des autres serroient en communes en totez cas de necessite'.²² But some shifts in allegiance followed Wyclif's development of FitzRalph's doctrine in the mid 1370s, when this brought out the implications of FitzRalph's theory for all clerical possession, and called into question the title of all clerics to property and all other assertions of dominion (as the 'restitution' issue in chapter 2

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illustrated).²³ It seems that at first the close relationship between this and the friars' own antipossessioner arguments encouraged them to exploit this position. It may have been the 1371 parliament to which Wyclif referred in *De Civili Dominio*, when narrating an antipossessioner fable he claimed to have heard in parliament.²⁴ Doubtless Wyclif was happy to receive the support of the friars for as long as they failed to realise the implications of his doctrine for their own orders. Again, at the Great Council held at Westminster in 1373, John Mardisley, a Franciscan friar, argued that the possessioners should not yield to papal demands for subsidy because the clergy should have no temporal dominion.²⁵ Yet by the mid 1370s the Franciscan friar William Woodford was opposing this view, arguing against Wyclif that the clergy might legitimately have civil dominion over property.²⁶ Mardisley's opponent was the Benedictine monk Uthred of Boldon, yet Wyclif numbered among his opponents both the friar Woodford and the monk Uthred. John Bankyn, the Austin friar who had argued against the possessioners in the 1371 parliament, took part in the 1382 Council which condemned Wyclif.²⁷

Evidence for ownership of FitzRalph manuscripts in the later period, when considered in this context, is a telling measure of what his theory had come to mean. Katherine Walsh noted that manuscripts of FitzRalph's writings were predominantly owned by the possessioners – 'members of the episcopacy, educated seculars, or endowed religious' – explaining that these were 'all groups with reason not to love the friars and to sympathize with FitzRalph's criticisms'.²⁸ Yet there is another possible explanation which better fits the content and reception of FitzRalph's work. Walsh's interpretation of the evidence for ownership makes it difficult to explain the presence and reception of the radical Franciscan element in FitzRalph's work. It seems more likely that use of FitzRalph as an authority by the more radical seculars and laity and Wyclif and the Lollards had forced the possessioners to study FitzRalph's writings as the source of the threat to themselves. The same cautions are applicable to Walsh's similar interpretation of the concentration of manuscripts of FitzRalph's antimendicant writings in northern and central Europe.²⁹ Thus when Uthred's fellow-Benedictine Adam Easton had his fine manuscript of FitzRalph's *De Pauperie Salvatoris* made, it seems likely that, as well as enjoying the antifraternal implications of this work, he wished to study there the perceived sources of the pernicious doctrine for which he challenged Wyclif. The irony of the shifts in allegiance produced by the attacks on the orders by FitzRalph and Wyclif was noted with wry and witty satire in 'Heu! Quanta Desolatio Anglie Prestatur'. In this poem about the Council of London of 1382 the poet noted that FitzRalph, now crowned in heaven by God, had only succeeded in uniting the friars; Wyclif was glorified by the greater miracle of uniting friars and monks:

Armacan, quem coelo Dominus coronavit,
Discordes tantomodo fratres adunavit;
Sed magno miraculo Wyclif coruscavit,
Cum fratres et monachos simul collocavit.³⁰

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(Armachan, whom the Lord has crowned in heaven, only united the quarrelling friars. But Wyclif dazzled us with a great miracle, when he brought together friars and monks.)

The contradictions which characterise the usual interpretation of FitzRalph's poverty theory and its reception are very similar to the contradictions and inadequacies of critical accounts of poverty in *Piers Plowman*. Again, the difficulty critics have faced is one of reconciling a radical poverty polemic with the poem's antifraternalism. Links with the poverty controversy have been suggested, usually in attempts to reconcile the poverty theme with the poem's antifraternalism, but there has been no detailed and successful attempt to relate the poem to the conflict. Adams, Bloomfield and Frank proposed links with polemic against the friars' poverty; Bloomfield tried to argue that the theory of poverty in the poem was monastic; he was followed in part by Shepherd, while Adams suggested that a range of views was included. Where links with Franciscan poverty have been remarked, for example by Adams, Gradon and Pearsall, irony has often been invoked as an explanation.³¹ The anticlerical implications of poverty in *Piers Plowman* have not previously been fully recognised or explored.

THE INTERPRETATION OF EVANGELICAL POVERTY

And wheiper he be or be noȝt, he berep þe signe of pouerte
And in þat secte oure saueour saued al mankynde.
Forþi [al] poore þat pacient is [of pure riȝt] may cley-men,
After hir endynge here, heueneriche blisse.
Muche hardier may he asken þat here myȝte haue his wille
In lond and in lordshipe and likynge of bodie
And for goddes loue leueþ al and lyueþ as a beggere. (B xiv 258-64)

The foundation for religious poverty was the example and teaching of Christ and the apostles. When he addressed the problem of the poverty of the saviour in his major theoretical work, FitzRalph was examining a question which had long been the subject of treatises by the friars. St Francis's vision of the naked Christ upon the cross had been the spur for the development of a religious profession which took for its central tenets gospel authorities for religious poverty. Fundamental to the creation of a poverty polemic favourable to the secular clergy, and afterwards to the anticlericals, therefore, was the reinterpretation of evangelical poverty. The basis for the new account was the new theoretical understanding of poverty, as that state which had prevailed before the introduction of civil law. It had to be shown that this was the meaning of the traditional texts for evangelical poverty. The praise of poverty in *Piers Plowman* was part of this effort to develop a new anticlerical polemic.

In the conflict over Christ's poverty the fundamental questions concerned the nature and degree of the poverty of Christ and the apostles. Polemicists quarrelled over whether evangelical poverty was monastic (personal but not communal poverty) or Franciscan (personal and communal poverty). If the

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gospel showed that Christ and the apostles had possessions – for themselves, or for the poor – was the dominion implied civil, or simply natural? Had Christ and the apostles voluntarily been so poor as to require alms, and even to need to beg? FitzRalph made a theory of poverty close to that of the Franciscans the basis for an antifraternal interpretation of evangelical poverty. As an absence of civil dominion, this poverty was incompatible with the acquisition of the rights and income of pastoral care. This was a departure from the approach of previous polemicists such as William of St Amour, whose interpretation of evangelical poverty was monastic. At the same time, FitzRalph desired to discredit the religious mendicancy which gave friars leisure to intrude in the parishes. The antimendicant position was traditional among the secular enemies of the friars, but the theory which underpinned FitzRalph's interpretation of evangelical poverty was not. FitzRalph used his new theory of poverty to refute the notion that Christ and the apostles had been voluntarily indigent. Taking the Franciscan distinction between civil and natural dominion for his own purposes, he argued that Christ's poverty was not voluntary indigence or beggary. Christ and the apostles were poor in respect of civil dominion, but retained natural dominion which, like natural lordship in the state of innocence, was a state in which each had dominion over the necessities to sustain life. However, since their natural dominion was restricted, they were involuntarily poor in respect of natural dominion. Turning this against the mendicant friars, FitzRalph argued that they could not justify reliance on alms with the example of evangelical poverty. The example and teaching of Christ and the apostles endorsed only involuntary reliance on alms. Alms-givers therefore should give only to those forced to rely on charity.

FitzRalph's position was stated succinctly in the friars' *Appellacio*, which sums up the main points to which the friars objected in the first three London Sermons:

Dixit quod Christus erat pauper, non quia voluit esse pauper, vel quia dilexit paupertatem ...

Quod Christus docuit non mendicare ...

Quod nullus homo potest sancte et sapienter voluntarie mendicare...³²

(He said that Christ was poor, not because he wished to be poor, or because he loved poverty ...

That Christ taught not to beg ...

That no man can beg voluntarily with wisdom and holiness ...)

The *Appellacio* was answered point by point by FitzRalph in the Fourth London Sermon *Nemo Vos Seducat*. Defending the first point in this sermon, FitzRalph explained:

... semper seu continuo pauper erat non quia propter se paupertatem dilexit aut voluit set quia restrictio sui dominii naturalis id egit.³³

(... he [Christ] was always or continuously poor, not because he loved or desired poverty for its own sake, but because the restriction of his natural lordship compelled it.)

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He restated his position in the *Defensio Curatorum*:

Also noon effect of synne is worpi to be loued for hit-silf aloon pou3 hit be loued in herte pat is infect; but pouert is pe effect of synne; panne pouert is nou3t worpi to be loued for hit-silf aloon. Pat pouert is pe effect of synne, y preue hit, for 3if oure forme fader & moder hadde neuer y-synned, schuld neuer haue be pore man of oure kynde.³⁴

This account of evangelical poverty served FitzRalph's antifraternel purposes well. It showed that mendicancy, like the pastoral privileges which it permitted, was a privilege inconsistent with natural and divine law. Voluntary reliance on alms was, like the acquisition of pastoral care, incompatible with evangelical poverty. It defined the proper role of lay almsgivers: they should not give to voluntarily mendicant friars, but only to those truly in need. It thus endorsed morally the offensive against almsgiving to the friars which, as was seen in the last chapter, was perceived as a corollary of their pastoral activities and the diversion of funds from the seculars. For FitzRalph, therefore, the new theory of evangelical poverty was part of the defence of the rights of the secular clergy to the offices and rewards of pastoral care.

FitzRalph's antifraternel account of evangelical poverty, which endorsed renunciation of civil dominion but rejected voluntary mendicancy, provided the basis for a critique of all clerical dominion. The friars' interpretation of evangelical poverty had always been an antipossessioner theory: always implicitly, often explicitly. In FitzRalph's polemic some of the work needed to make this an *anticlerical* theory had already been done, for, by giving evangelical poverty an antifraternel interpretation, he had turned the theory against those clerics whose interests it had formerly served. But further revisions were needed to produce an anticlerical interpretation; FitzRalph himself, of course, wishing to defend the secular clergy, had no use for its broader anticlerical potential. For the new antifraternel poverty polemic to become a broadly anticlerical polemic against clerical property some further changes of emphasis and interpretation were necessary. Potentially, FitzRalph's theory was an antipossessioner theory, since it impugned all civil dominion and espoused a state in which each had dominion over nothing beyond what was necessary. Bringing out the antipossessioner implications of this theory required some shifts of emphasis and some seeming reversals. It was necessary to marry the antifraternel aspects of FitzRalph's theory with its potential as an argument against all clerical possession. Thus whereas FitzRalph had claimed that Christ never loved or desired poverty, there was a place in the anticlerical account for willing renunciation of possession. This might be integrated with the antimendicant argument by interpreting renunciation as giving up all superfluities. Renunciation would then apply to all the rich whose sinful retention of civil dominion restricted the natural dominion of the indigent. Equally, the antimendicant argument applied to all clerics who defrauded the poor: to the possessionate clergy who should merely be trustees of the goods of the poor, as well as to religious mendicants whose claim to poverty was false. The new poverty polemic might therefore be

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turned against mendicant friars, rich almsgivers and possessionate clergy alike, and used to enhance the claims of the involuntary poor.

In *Piers Plowman* evangelical poverty is the model and source of authority for the patient poverty which is praised in B XI, by Rechelesnesse in the C-text, and by Pacience in both B- and C-texts. The treatment of poverty in the poem is characteristic of the new polemic in that here authorities which were traditionally part of the friars' defence of religious mendicancy are part of an account of poverty which emphasises the claims of the involuntary poor. While uncertainty over the direction of the new polemic is apparent in some variant manuscripts, the full polemic emerges in a more confident C-text version. This accounts for the interpretation in the poem of evangelical authorities for solicitude, renunciation and indigence.

Examples of biblical texts and authorities for evangelical poverty, traditionally used in the mendicants' defence of poverty, occur in the praise of poverty in B XI, and the interpretation of them there is revised and developed in Rechelesnesse's praise of poverty in the C-text. The choice and treatment of these examples is characteristic of the new anticlerical poverty polemic. A good example is the interpretation of Matt. 19:21 and Prov. 30:8 in the B-text:

Alpou3 Salomon seide, as folke seep in pe bible,
Diuicias nec paupertates &c,
Wiser pan Salomon was berep wisesse and tauzte
That parfit pouerte was no possession to haue,
And lif moost likynge to god as luc berep wisesse:
Si vis perfectus esse vade & vende [*&c*].
And is to mene to men pat on pis moolde lyuen,
Whoso wole be pure parfit moot possession forsake
Or selle it, as seip pe book, and pe siluer dele
To beggeris pat begge and bidden for goddes loue. (B XI 270-8)³⁵

Traditionally, these texts were used as authorities in examinations of religious mendicancy. Matt. 19:21, Christ's advice to the young man who would be perfect, was fundamental to Franciscan poverty. The Rule of 1221 began with this text, and it was the first authority used by Bonaventure in his *articulus* 'De Paupertate quoad Abrenuntiationem'.³⁶ In the second half of the fourteenth century it was still considered as an authority for religious mendicancy by the Benedictine monk Uthred of Boldon, in his *quaestio* against the friars.³⁷ Prov. 30:8 was a classic authority against religious mendicancy; examples are to be found in Bonaventure's *articulus*, in the *Tractatus Pauperis* by his contemporary and fellow Franciscan John Pecham, in the *De Periculis* by William of St Amour and, from the next century, in a well-known *quaestio De Validis Mendicantibus*, in Richard Maidstone's *Protectorium Pauperis*, and in FitzRalph's *Defensio Curatorum*.³⁸ What is notable about the use of these texts in *Piers Plowman* is that they are treated as authorities for and against poverty, in a defence of poverty, whereas traditionally they had been used in connection with mendicancy. This is an example of the new strategy initiated by FitzRalph. William of St Amour, for

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example, had argued that Christ's advice to renounce everything was not an authority for mendicancy, but for communal property on monastic lines. This interpretation must have been especially well known, as it was repeated in the *Roman de la Rose* where Jean de Meun versified many of William's arguments.³⁹ The new approach is to be found in FitzRalph's *De Pauperie Salvatoris*. Here, and in the London Sermons where he restated and defended his theory, FitzRalph used the theory of original dominion as the basis for the interpretation of evangelical poverty. Evangelical poverty was the absence of property under civil law, but dominion over necessities under natural law. In his Second London Sermon FitzRalph restated a principle established in the First London Sermon:

Sextum principium fuit quod dominus noster Ihesus in modum conuersacionis humane nullum habuit humanum dominium, aut ius humanum vtendi, preter suum originale dominium.⁴⁰

(The sixth principle was that our lord Jesus, during his time on earth, had no human lordship or human right of use, only original lordship.)

Like Adam in paradise, during his time on earth Christ had had no civil dominion, only original dominion. Evangelical poverty was to be distinguished from harder forms of poverty where even material necessities are not assured.⁴¹ It was poverty with necessities, not this hardest poverty, to which Christ referred in Matt. 19:21.⁴² Whereas William of St Amour had interpreted Matt. 19:21 in favour of communal property, FitzRalph, like the Franciscans, interpreted it in favour of the renunciation of civil dominion, but unlike the Franciscans, showed that it did not teach mendicancy. In *Piers Plowman*, characteristically, FitzRalph's line is followed and poverty defended. The strategy for Prov. 30:8 is even clearer, because here the friars' argument was distinguished by a special version of the biblical text. The Carmelite Richard Maidstone, defending religious mendicancy against arguments he considered to have derived from FitzRalph, claimed that there was a good case for reading Prov. 30:8, 'Divitias et paupertatem ne dederis mihi' ('give me neither poverty nor wealth'; the Vulgate has 'mendicitatem' – 'mendicancy' – not 'paupertatem' – 'poverty'). He claimed that Jerome used 'pauper' and 'mendicus' synonymously when translating the Bible; it was therefore likely that Prov. 30:8 was not about mendicancy. No less an authority than Augustine had used the 'paupertatem' form.⁴³ The *Piers Plowman* example is another instance of this variant reading: '*Diuitias nec paupertates &c*', but here it is used as a defence of poverty in an audacious new poverty polemic in which poverty is praiseworthy but voluntary mendicancy reprehensible.⁴⁴

Characteristically of the later polemic, Matt. 19:21 is interpreted in *Piers Plowman* as an authority for renunciation, rather than simply poverty, and associated with other texts and arguments found in mendicancy polemics. Thus although it is used, as it was by FitzRalph, in an antifraternal way (against mendicancy), it is also part of an anticlerical poverty polemic,

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against clerical possession also. Renunciation, and lack of solicitude about how the necessities of life were to be obtained, were essential parts of the new poverty polemic, since the possessioners defended their rights to wealth on the basis of an interpretation of evangelical poverty close to that formerly used by the antimendicant seculars. William of St Amour had claimed that Matt. 19:21 meant poverty with common possessions; just so Uthred of Boldon interpreted the text in his defence of monastic life *De Perfectione Vivendi*.⁴⁵ The broader, anticlerical, thrust of the new interpretation in *Piers Plowman* is recognised in an annotation here in Oriel 79 and Cambridge University Library Ll 4 14: 'war munkes and chanouns'.⁴⁶ In *Piers Plowman*, significantly, the interpretation of Matt. 19:21 is associated with a traditional defence of renunciation, and an attack on solicitude:

For failed neuere man mete pat myȝtful god seruep;
As Dauid seip in pe Sauter: to swich pat ben in wille
To serue god goodliche, ne greuep hym no penaunce:
Nichil impossibile volenti,
Ne lakkep neuere liflode, lynnene ne wollen:
Inquirentes autem dominum non minuentur omni bono.

(B XI 279–82a)

It was traditional for the mendicants to refute arguments against renunciation of temporal goods by claiming that the righteous would be provided for. The usual authority for this was Ps. 37 [36 in the Vulgate]:25, 'never have I seen a righteous man forsaken', quoted for example at the end of Bonaventure's *articulus* on renunciation.⁴⁷ In some B-text manuscripts this text is quoted here, enlarging on what 'Dauid seip in pe Sauter' (B XI 280), and giving a further example of the exploitation for the new polemic of a traditionally mendicant argument.⁴⁸

In the C-text revision and amplification of the B-text praise of poverty there are many more examples of the interpretation of evangelical poverty in this way. Texts and examples traditionally used as authorities for religious mendicancy become part of a new anticlerical poverty polemic. Here there is an even greater emphasis on the theme of renunciation. Christ's precepts in Matt. 19:21 and the example of Christ and the apostles are amplified with more texts which were traditional authorities for the friars' poverty: Matt. 19:29 (C XII 158a), '*Quicumque relinquit patrem et matrem etc.*' ('anyone who leaves father and mother'); Luke 14:33 (C XII 169a), '*Nisi renunciaueritis omnia que possidetis etc.*' ('unless you renounce all that you possess'); 2 Cor. 6:10 (C XIII 4a), '*Tanquam nichil habentes*' ('as those who have nothing'); the story of the widow's mite (Mark 12:43, C XIII 94–7a), and the parable of the rich man who built storehouses '*O stulte, ista nocte anima tua egredietur*' ('Fool! This night your soul will depart') (C XII 214a, Luke 12:20). The example of Christ and the apostles is here quite clearly one of voluntary poverty: 'Oure prince Iesu pouerte chees, and his apostles alle' (C XIII 3). As in the case of Matt. 19:21, these texts were traditional in the mendicant account of evangelical poverty. Christ's teachings on poverty in Matt. 19:27

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(closely related to Matt. 19:29), Luke 14:33 and Mark 12:43 were all among the biblical authorities used by Bonaventure in his defence of renunciation.⁴⁹ The record of a *quaestio* by his contemporary the Dominican friar John Pointlasne listed Matt. 19:27 and 2 Cor. 6:10 among the authorities for renunciation.⁵⁰ FitzRalph's Franciscan opponent Roger Conway listed Luke 12:20 as an authority for renunciation, but here a middle state, neither rich nor poor ('diues nec pauper').⁵¹ Again, as in the case of Matt. 19:21, the interpretation of evangelical poverty here is clearly one of Franciscan renunciation, both individual and communal, and not merely the monastic interpretation of renunciation of only private property. Here again the interpretation is broadly anticlerical, both antimendicant and anti-possessioner, incorporating and developing the earlier specifically anti-fraternal interpretation. By contrast FitzRalph had proposed a cautious interpretation of Matt. 19:27, 'relinquimus omnia' ('we have left everything'), following the pro-possessioner, anti-fraternal line of John XXII.⁵² For Uthred of Boldon, Matt. 19:27 was a fundamental authority for the monastic life of common possessions, as it was in the Monk of Bury's Treatise.⁵³

Perhaps one of the most audacious aspects of the new poverty polemic in *Piers Plowman* is the exploitation, largely in the B-text, of the authorities and arguments traditionally used by the mendicants to counter charges based on the Augustinian doctrine of manual labour. This was a defence of renunciation particularly attractive to the mendicants for whom, at least in theory, living on property was not an alternative to living by labour. The two poles of the conflict were often associated with and expressed through two seemingly opposed biblical passages: the Pauline precepts on work, especially 2 Thess. 3:10 ('the man who will not work shall not eat'), and a passage from Christ's teaching concerning poverty and anxiety (Matt. 6:25-34, Luke 12:22-31):

I bid you put away anxious thoughts about food and drink . . . Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow and reap and store in barns . . . Consider how the lilies grow in the fields; they do not work, they do not spin . . .

The Pauline precepts for manual labour seemed to be contradicted by Christ's teaching about the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, which seemed to endorse a lack of anxiety. Both poles of the conflict, and the antimendicant reconciliation of them, derived from Augustine's *De Opere Monachorum*, an important authority for the monastic life. Augustine recorded how some contemplatives interpreted the Pauline precepts figuratively, as references to spiritual rather than manual work, on the authority of Christ's teaching. He argued that this interpretation was mistaken; the gospel prohibited only *excessive* solicitude, that is, concern for the provision of anything more than necessities; thus the Pauline precepts must be interpreted literally, as endorsements of manual labour.⁵⁴ Participants in the late medieval poverty conflict saw in this anecdote a precedent for their own dispute. Traditionally, the friars included the passage from Christ's teaching among their authorities

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for evangelical poverty, while their opponents, following the monastic theory of common property with manual labour, insisted that only excessive solicitude was prohibited. Bonaventure, for example, used the birds of the air (Matt. 6:26, Luke 12:24) as an authority in favour of renunciation, and as support for the contemplative life without labour.⁵⁵ His opponent William of St Amour used Augustine's interpretation of the birds of the air to reconcile it with the Pauline precepts on manual labour.⁵⁶ As no revision was necessary for his antifraternel argument, FitzRalph followed the possessioners' interpretation. When his fictional debating partner Johannes asked whether Matt. 6:25–34 did not amount to murder, suicide and the temptation of God, FitzRalph distinguished reasonable solicitude from excessive solicitude, which distracted from the religious life.⁵⁷

Something of the emergence of the new anticlerical strategy is apparent in the A and B versions of *Piers Plowman* but manuscript volatility and heavy C-text revision in such passages suggest that it was a strategy not fully formulated or completely successful, and perhaps in some cases not fully understood. This is especially clear in the passages based on the key extract from Matt. 6:25–34 (Luke 12). These occur at the end of the ploughing sequence and in Pacience's praise of poverty, which are both subject to heavy revision in the C-text.⁵⁸ The ploughing sequence is concluded with a speech by Piers in which he rejects his former solicitude, and dedicates himself to contemplative work in future. The shift of emphasis from manual to spiritual work is apparent when the symbol of manual work, the plough, becomes a figure for spiritual work: 'Of preieres and of penaunce my plou3 shal ben hereafter' (B vii 124). Pacience promises Haukyn a living even without active work and gives examples from the Old Testament of those who survived without work. This is comparable with the Franciscan account of solicitude, which persisted in the fourteenth century. For example, one of FitzRalph's Augustinian opponents, Jordan of Saxony, claimed as Bonaventure had that Augustine's reading of the solicitude texts applied only to those who became religious from sloth or other dishonourable motives.⁵⁹ The story of the drought in the time of Eli had been taken from Augustine by Bonaventure in his discussion of begging, and was ironically attributed to the less than exemplary friar in the *Summoner's Tale* as an example of one who had lived in poverty and contemplation.⁶⁰ It is easier to see how a place in the new poverty polemic might be found for the renunciation of possessions than for the renunciation of labour, and variant readings and heavy revision and omission in the corresponding C-text passages might indicate uncertainty over the best strategy with the solicitude argument. Pacience's interpretation of '*Ne sollicitis &c; Volucres celi deus pascit &c*' (B xiv 33a) seems to be the traditional 'Franciscan' one, yet the preceding line, which Kane and Donaldson excluded, suspecting it to be scribal, suggests the traditional 'possessioner' interpretation: 'We sholde nocht be to bisy abouten oure liflode' (Schmidt, *B-Text*, xiv 34).⁶¹ The 'excessive solicitude' ('to bisy') interpretation is also implied by Piers's decision not to work 'so harde' or be 'so bisy' in future. In

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the readings of most B-text manuscripts, printed by Schmidt, this seems to have been supported by the 'possessor' interpretation of '*Ne solliciti sitis*':

'And but if Luc lye, he lereþ us by foweles
We sholde noht be to bisy aboute the worldes blisse:
Ne solliciti sitis, he seith in the Gospel ...'

(Schmidt, *B-Text*, VII 125-7)

Variation in the A-text here seems to have prompted a 'Franciscan' reconstruction of these lines by Kane and Donaldson which omits the qualifying 'too':

And but if luc lye he lereþ vs [anoper]
By foweles [pat are] noȝt bisy aboute þe [bely ioye] ...

(B VII 129-30)⁶²

Although syntactically the B-text version may seem like a paraphrase, there was of course no linguistic basis for rendering 'sollicitus' as 'to bisy'. 'Sollicitus' was usually translated simply by 'bisy', as in the Wycliffite Bible: 'Therefore Y say to ȝou, that ȝe ben nat besie to ȝoure lijf, what ȝe shulen ete'.⁶³ Comparable is the variation in the A-text and B-text over the nature of the work prescribed by Hunger. In the B-text manuscripts, printed by Skeat, both manual and spiritual labour are endorsed:

Kynde witt wolde that eche a wyght wrouȝte
Or in dykyng or in deluyng or trauaillynge in preyeres,
Contemplatyf lyf or actyf lyf Cryst wolde men wrouȝte.

(Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, B VI 249-51)

This reading clearly endorses both active and contemplative, or spiritual, work. On the basis of defective alliteration and the easier reading of 'Dykyng ... deluyng' Kane and Donaldson emended with the A-text reading which, if it does not condemn spiritual work as an alternative to manual work, less clearly endorses it:

Or [wip tech]ynge or [tell]ynge or trauaillynge [of hondes],
Contemplatif lif or Actif lif; crist wolde [it als].

(B VI 248-9)⁶⁴

As in the case of the '*Ne solliciti sitis*' lines, these lines are omitted in the C-text.⁶⁵

The friars' interpretation of evangelical poverty furthered the interests of mendicant clerics; the monks' interpretation favoured possessor clerics; the new anticlerical interpretation asserted the interests, not of clerics at all, but of the involuntary lay poor. The claims of the involuntary poor are endorsed in *Piers Plowman* by the example and teaching of Christ and the apostles, against the claims of religious (voluntary) mendicants, and all those possessors who likewise defraud the true poor. Pacience, in the extract quoted above, claims that Christ was poor, and recommends that the rich 'haue rupe and rewarde wel þe poore' (B XIV 145). In the B-text praise of poverty such too is partly the force of the examples of poverty: 'Why I meue

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pis matere is moost for pe pouere; For in hir liknesse oure lord [lome] hap ben yknowe' (B XI 232-8). Here it is claimed that Christ appeared as a poor man to Cleophas (Luke 24:13-53), thus charity is enjoined on the almsgiver, for 'Iesu crist of heuene, In a pouere mannes apparaille pursue[p] vs euer' (B XI 185-6). Just so, John and 'opere seintes' (B XI 246) are said to have been poor, and to have begged like poor pilgrims. Christ was born to a poor mother, who was married to a poor man.⁶⁶ Christ's admonition to invite the infirm and the poor to the feast (Luke 14:12-14) is used to endorse poverty and to urge the rich to give alms.⁶⁷ This is characteristic of the new poverty polemic. The friars were driven to complain that their opponents foolishly extolled the involuntary poor, treating them as if they, rather than religious mendicants, were the imitators of evangelical poverty. Such was the charge of the Carmelite Richard Maidstone against his opponent Ashwardby.⁶⁸

The treatment of Luke 14:12-14 is a telling marker of the new poverty polemic in *Piers Plowman*. The meaning of this text was one of the major issues of this phase of the poverty conflict, and is an index of its nature and focus at this stage. Essentially, the question was one of language. FitzRalph argued that Luke 14:12-14 should be construed in a particular way. The friars expressed his position succinctly in their *Appellacio*:

'Cum facis conuiuium voca pauperes debiles claudos et cecos' sic, vt asseruit, debuit construi et intelligi: '... voca pauperes debiles, pauperes claudos, pauperes cecos'.⁶⁹

('When you have a feast invite the poor, crippled, lame, and blind', ought to be construed thus, so he maintained: '... invite the poor crippled ones, the poor lame ones, the poor blind ones'.)

The point of FitzRalph's construction was that 'pauperes' should not be interpreted as a separate category of those to be given alms, in addition to the categories of the crooked, lame and blind; alms should only be given to those who were both poor *and* infirm, and therefore, not to those who were (on account of idleness) simply poor. FitzRalph argued this in his Second London Sermon, then defended his position in the Fourth London Sermon and the *Defensio Curatorum*.⁷⁰ A debt to this argument is often reflected in the use of unambiguous wording, as in the *quaestio* on mendicancy, *De Validis Mendicantibus*:

Item, mendicacio istorum est in preiudicium et iniuriam proximorum; scilicet pauperum cecorum, pauperum claudorum, et pauperum infirmorum.⁷¹

(Item: mendicancy in such as these [voluntary beggars] is harmful and unjust to their neighbours, that is to say, to the poor blind, the poor lame, and the poor sick.)

Uthred of Boldon used the argument in his *quaestio* on mendicancy, and it became a favourite with Wycliffite writers.⁷² Maidstone dealt with the interpretation of Luke 14:12 in his *Protectorium Pauperis*, while his *Determinatio* against Ashwardby was dedicated to answering the question of whether Christ had thus prohibited almsgiving to the able-bodied who begged regularly and voluntarily ('Utrum Christus enumerans in euangelio pauperes

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claudos cecos et debiles exclusit ab elemosina corporali omnes validos habitualiter et spontanee mendicantes').⁷³ The focus, that is to say, was on the *definition* of need.

'IN ENGLISSH . . . IT IS WEL HARD TO EXPOUNEN'

'Haue god my troupe', quod Haukyn, '[I here yow] preise faste pouerte.
What is Pouerte, pacience', quod he, 'properly to mene?'

'*Paupertas*,' quod Pacience, '*est odibile bonum, Remocio curarum, possessio sine calumpnia, donum dei, sanit[atis] mater, absque sollicitudine semita, sapencie temperatrix, negocium sine dampno, Incerta fortuna, absque sollicitudine felicitas.*'

'I kan noȝt construe', quod haukyn; 'ye moste kenne me pis on englissh.'

'[Al pis] in englissh', quod Pacience, 'it is wel hard to expounen,

Ac somdeel I shal seyen it, by so pow vnderstonde. . . ' (B XIV 274-9)

The problem of the definition of poverty was, as it always had been, a problem of language. The battle over the interpretation of evangelical poverty was a battle to gain linguistic territory. This effort was as necessary for the new anticlericalism as it had been for all previous polemic. Competing theories of poverty gave the vocabulary of possession and lordship competing meanings. Francis himself had exploited the linguistic implications of absolute poverty. Renunciation of property divested commercial and legal terms such as 'hereditas' of their traditional meanings, in the Rule and its expositions.⁷⁴ The verb 'habere', argued the Franciscan apologist Bonagratia of Bergamo, had different senses according to whether natural or civil dominion was in question.⁷⁵ The precise force of the words of the Franciscan Rule remained contestable even for those agreed in principle to the Franciscan theory. It seems that the *usus pauper* controversy originated as a conflict over which words were counsel and which binding precept. In *Exiit qui seminat* Nicholas III tried to resolve the question by linking meaning with authorial intention.⁷⁶ The disagreement over the meanings of 'pauper' and 'mendicus' in the Bible, and the conflict over the correct English translation of Luke 14:12-14, illustrate vividly how the field of conflict remained linguistic in the *Piers Plowman* period. The application of the vocabulary of possession to the friars' acquisition of pastoral care was a satirical strategy appropriate to a linguistic campaign. The Luke 14:12-14 controversy focussed on the campaign objectives most important for an anticlerical poverty polemic. The new anticlerical definition of *paupertas* was to be written with an English vocabulary of need.

Some of the characteristics of the new anticlerical language are to be identified in the extract from Pacience's praise of poverty. The association here of 'poverty' with 'patience' is frequent in *Piers Plowman*. Characteristically, it is a collocation which blurs the distinction between voluntary and involuntary poverty (but not mendicancy), promoting the association central to the new polemic between voluntary renunciation of wealth (both by lay

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almsgivers and by clerics) and the alleviation of the suffering of the involuntary poor. Characteristically also, poverty is here defined in terms of a series of authorities familiar from moral and religious treatises, in the layman's language of English.⁷⁷ Typically, the new anticlerical language of poverty asserted an analysis of religious poverty which brought into relation the voluntary mendicant, the possessioner cleric, the involuntary poor whom these defrauded and the almsgiver, who must decide where to place his charity. Clerical defrauders of the true poor were compared with lay idlers. But developing and establishing a language which might achieve this was not at all straightforward. If it was 'wel hard' for Pacience to define poverty in English, it is even less surprising that the speaking of need was problematic:

'... And god al his grete Ioye goostliche he lefte
And cam and took mankynde and bicam nedy.
So [he was nedy], as seip pe book in manye sondry places,
That he seide in his sorwe on pe selue roode:
"Bope fox and fowel may fle to hole and crepe
And pe fissh hap fyn to flete wip to reste;
Ther nede hap ynome me pat I moot nede abide
And suffre sorwes ful soure, pat shal to Ioye torne."
Forpi be no3t abasshed to bide and to be nedy
Sip he pat wro3te al pe world was wilfulliche nedy,
So neuere noon so nedy ne pouerer deide.' (B xx 40-50)

Piers Plowman was not the only text where the meaning of need was in question. In his *Protectorium Pauperis* Richard Maidstone complained that his opponents were changing the meaning of words. In particular, he claimed that 'Ad modum loquendi modernorum' ('in the newfangled way of speaking used by certain people') (by the 'moderni') the word 'mendicus' excluded anyone who voluntarily became poor, thus a new meaning ('novum modum significandi') had been imposed on '*mendicitas*'.⁷⁸ This new, controversial poverty polemic was associated with the use of layman's English, for Maidstone complained that his opponent John Ashwardby put forward his views 'in lingua materna' ('in the mother tongue') to the laity, while the friar defended himself 'in scholis et coram clericis in lingua latina' ('in the schools and before clerics in Latin').⁷⁹ From the later fourteenth-century phase of the poverty conflict, the question of terminology goes back to the sixth book of *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, where FitzRalph had attempted to define different degrees and states of poverty by naming them. Despite the fact that the words had sometimes been used interchangeably by patristic writers (a fact Maidstone exploited in his exegesis of Prov. 30:8), following traditional etymologies he proposed that 'inops' should be used for one who is deprived of wealth, 'mendicus' for one who is forced to beg, 'egenus' for one whose actions are limited by his lack of wealth and 'pauper' for one who is poor.⁸⁰ In focussing on the issue of the vocabulary properly used for one who voluntarily relies on alms, the conflict between Ashwardby and Maidstone centred the perennial conflict over language and

interpretation on the main issue at this stage of the conflict: the meaning of need.

Nede's speech is a passage of linguistic trickery, whose power, textual evidence suggests, was never harnessed for the anticlerical effort in any C-text revision, but which remains at the end of the poem more as a dramatic illustration of the problem than of any solution.⁸¹ The anticlerical objective must be to exclude from 'need' the condition of voluntary mendicancy, as FitzRalph, and Ashwardby, had attempted for 'mendicus'. But, here at the close of *Piers Plowman*, Nede still means otherwise. Here the meanings of 'need', 'compulsion' and 'indigence' are reconciled with their apparent *opposites*, volition and temperance. This is achieved using authorities and arguments familiar in the debate over evangelical poverty: the proverb 'nede hap no lawe' (B xx 10) and Matt. 8:20 (Luke 9:58), 'Foxes have their holes, the birds their roosts; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' The biblical text was a friars' authority for complete renunciation, listed for example in *De Renuntiantibus* by the Dominican John Pointlasne, by Bonaventure in 'De Paupertate quoad Abrenuntiationem' and by Uthred, Wyclif's Benedictine opponent, as an argument to be dismissed in his defence of ecclesiastical possession, *De Dotacione Ecclesie Sponse Christi*.⁸² When FitzRalph usurped the friars' polemic, the text became an authority in his account of evangelical poverty, for he used it to argue that Christ had no civil dominion during his time on earth.⁸³ Its antifraternel potential was exploited in the Latin poem *Sedens Super Flumina*, where it is used to satirise the friars' wealth: friars are castle-dwellers like foxes with holes.⁸⁴ The proverb 'Necessitas non habet legem' ('nede hap no lawe') was also associated originally with the Franciscan theory of poverty. A passage endorsing mendicancy in the Franciscan Rule includes the proverb, and, as already noted, the commonplace was used in *Exiit qui seminat* to characterise the nature of the dominion begging friars were to have. Friars might use material goods, without ownership, just as anyone in extreme necessity might use another's property without ownership.⁸⁵ In turn, this became an antimendicant and finally an anticlerical argument. According to FitzRalph, necessity justified forced beggary, while voluntary beggary, like their claims to a pastoral role, made the friars thieves and transgressors of the commandment against coveting a neighbour's goods.⁸⁶ The antipossessioner potential of this argument was developed by Wyclif in *De Civili Dominio*. There he related a fable about little birds who had clothed an owl with their feathers, but in time of necessity (attack by a hawk) had taken them back to defend themselves; just so, he argued, the crown might legitimately seize the goods of the clergy for the defence of the realm.⁸⁷

In Nede's speech these authorities are used in a way which divests 'need' of the meaning attributed to it by FitzRalph and Wyclif. Here the focus on the word is achieved through wordplay, 'Ther nede hap ynome me *pat* I moot nede abide' (B xx 46). Need is associated with unforced indigence, a necessary strategy for reuniting poverty with religious mendicancy. Comparable uses

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of these authorities are to be found in contemporary polemic, while the play on 'need' links the passage with the conflict over definitions in the later fourteenth century. FitzRalph had tried to establish that voluntary need was *by definition* impossible; anyone who was voluntarily needy by definition had the wherewithal to avoid need, and was thus not a true beggar, but a false one. Christ therefore could not have been an example of voluntary religious mendicancy unless he had been a false beggar, and he could not have been actually needy because he had original dominion:

Also 3if Crist beggide wilfullich he was a verrey ypocrite, semyng a begger, & was no verrey begger, for Crist was neuer a verrey begger, for no man pat may haue y-now³ at his wille, is a verrey begger, pou³ he begge. But he is a verrey faytour, & he pat beggеп wilfullich may haue y-now³ at hys wille; for elles he beggеп nou³t wilfullich, but he is dryue to by nede, and Crist was neuer ypocrite. Panne Crist beggide neuer wilfullich, noper as a faytour.⁸⁸

The power of this argument for driving a wedge between poverty and religious mendicancy was exploited in the English Wycliffite treatise *De Blasphemia*. FitzRalph is the acknowledged source of the antimendicant argument here: 'Seynt Richart of Armawhe proves on feir maner, pat were an heresy to putt upon Crist suche maner of beggyng, and mayntene hit stifly.' Christ could not have been a beggar because, by virtue of his perfect original dominion, he was lord over all. Only 'pes blynde blasphemies [friars] con not depart beggyng fro povert'.⁸⁹ Again, in the clash between Maidstone and Ashwardby the issue seems to have been whether unforced, spontaneous beggary could be justified on grounds of necessity. Maidstone attacked Ashwardby's definition 'spontanee mendicare est mendicare praeter articulum necessitatis' ('to beg voluntarily is to beg other than at the moment of necessity') which he claimed derived from FitzRalph's definition 'spontanee mendicare est mendicare nulla necessitate cogente' ('to beg voluntarily is to beg undriven by need').⁹⁰ He suggested a new definition of 'necessitas': there were *several* kinds of necessity in which begging was legitimate.⁹¹ Only 'extrema' necessity was the absolute lack of material goods to sustain life. As in this friar's treatise, in Nede's speech voluntary need becomes linguistically possible. Nede argues that Christ was 'wilfulliche nedy', in an attempt to show that necessity might be unforced. Nede's attempts to change the meaning of necessity using the authorities Matt. 8:20 and the proverb may also be compared with strategies adopted by the mendicants. The close political connection between the mendicancy issue and the rights of the clergy to temporal dominion had given rise to arguments like Nede's based on a perceived similarity between the right of kings to seize the clergy's goods in cases of necessity, and the rights of mendicants to beg:

'[Coudes]tow nozt excuse pee as dide pe kyng and opere:
That pow toke to pi bilyue, to clopes and to sustenaunce,
[Was] by techyng and by tellyng of *Spiritus temperancie*,
And pow nome na moore pan nede pee tauzte?
And nede hap no lawe ne neuere shal falle in dette

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For pre pynges he takeþ his lif for to saue...

So nede at gret nede may nyemen as for his owene... (B xx 6–11,20)

Just as Nede bases this argument on natural law ('lawe of kynde') (B xx 18), so this was used as a basis for seizing temporalities by the two Austin friars, John Bankyn and Thomas Ashbourne, at the parliament in 1371; it was perhaps to this incident that Wyclif referred with the owl fable in *De Civili Dominio*.⁹² The Austin friar Geoffrey Hardeby brought out the implications of this kind of argument for religious mendicancy in his *De Vita Evangelica*: religious might beg on the basis of necessity if a king might seize temporalities on this basis.⁹³ To show that necessity had applied in the case of Christ, it was necessary to argue as Nede does that Christ was divested of divine dominion during his time on earth. Just so Matt. 8:20 was used in *Friar Daw's Reply*: 'Crist aftir oo kynde was lord of alle, And aftir pat oper nedide to begge'.⁹⁴

The exact interpretation of Matt. 8:20 in the passage depends on the meaning of 'to bide' (B xx 48). Here differences of interpretation among modern editors amplify differences suggested by manuscript spellings and variants, which themselves reflect the medieval controversy over the interpretation of this text. Skeat printed 'bydde', from Old English 'biddan', which meant 'beg' or 'pray' (Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, B xx 47, C xxiii 48). Schmidt, however, glossed 'bide' as 'endurance rather than mendicancy', implying that it represents Old English 'bidan', which meant 'wait', and, elaborating elsewhere, he argued that 'biden' evokes 'bidden', only to exclude it.⁹⁵ The variety in modern interpretations reflects the variation in manuscript readings found in both B- and C-text manuscripts, which is crucial to the question of whether Christ's words are interpreted by Nede as an endorsement of begging, rather than simply of poverty:

'Bope fox and fowel may fle to hole and crepe
And pe fissh hap fyn to flete wip to reste;
Ther nede hap ynome me pat I moot nede abide
And suffre sorwes ful soure, pat shal to Ioye torne.'
Forpi be noȝt abasshed to bide and to be nedy

Sip he pat wroȝte al pe world was wilfulliche nedy... (B xx 44–9)

Does Nede conclude from Matt. 8:20 that the Dreamer should not be ashamed to beg, or simply that he should not be ashamed to endure? A variant in B-text manuscript F, 'bowe' ('submit'), notably removes any possibility of an interpretation in favour of mendicancy. This is a telling variant, for there is much evidence elsewhere that, although Nede's speech was never converted into anticlerical poverty language, the word 'bidden' was a target in the linguistic campaign.

'Bidden' and its derivatives, especially 'bidder', in the senses of 'beg' and 'beggar', are characteristic of the A- and B-texts, but not of the C-text.⁹⁶ Since 'bidder' can mean both 'one who asks for alms' and 'one who prays' the word clearly had potential for the satirical treatment of religious mendicancy, and indeed this double meaning is played upon: 'Beggeres for hir biddynge bidden [of] men Mede' (B III 219).⁹⁷ However, differences among the

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manuscripts and versions of the poem suggest uneasiness with the ambiguity of the word. The alpha B-text manuscripts read 'beggyng' for 'biddyng' here, and in the C-text there is a clearer distinction between those who pray and those who beg, 'Bothe begeres and bedemen crauen mede for here preyeres' (C III 274). A-text manuscripts have variants significant here (A III 206). Again, the early manuscript of the poem known as Z includes a satirical play on the ambiguity in its version of a Prologue line: 'Byddares as beggares faste aboute yede' (Z Pro 37), where other manuscripts read 'and' instead of 'as'; for example B Pro 40: 'Bidderes and begeres faste aboute yede'. Variants in the B-text line 'To beggeris pat begge and bidden for goddes loue' (B XI 278) may be attributable to scribal uneasiness with the ambiguity of the word 'bidden', as Kane and Donaldson suggested.⁹⁸ The C-text rewriting at C III 274 is one among many examples of the avoidance of 'bidden' in revision.⁹⁹ The absence of 'bidder' from the preferred vocabulary of the C-text is confirmed by the C-text interpolations on the subject of mendicancy in C V and C IX, where 'bidder' is not used, and a new word 'loller' is introduced in its stead.¹⁰⁰

Although the problem of 'bidden' was not solved until the C-text interpolations, already in the earlier versions of the poem there were experiments with new words for beggars. Here already a new, anticlerical, vocabulary of poverty was under development. The words chosen created the new anticlerical perspective. They also betray the circumstances which had made the new point of view possible. Particularly important and telling, in both respects, are 'faitour' and its derivative verb 'faiten'.

'Faitour' and 'faiten' are often associated with begging in *Piers Plowman*, especially in the sequence on wasters in B VI, where a 'faitour' is one who is falsely needy. In all versions of the poem 'faitours' are both lay and religious beggars; it is not only the blind and the bed-ridden who are mysteriously cured by Hunger's harsh treatment, but a crowd of hermits take up spades too:

Faitours for fere flowen into Bernes
And flapten on wip flailles fro morwe til euen
That hunger was no3t hardy on hem for to loke.
For a pot[el] of peses pat Piers hadde ymaked
An heap of heremytes henten hem spades
And kitten hir copes and courtepies hem maked
And wente as werkmen [to wedynge] and [mowynge]
And doluen [drit] and [dung] to [ditte out] hunger.
Blynde and bedreden were bootned a pousand;
That seten to begge siluer soone were pei heeled,
For pat was bake for bayard was boote for many hungry;
And many a beggere for benes buxum was to swynke,
And ech a pouere man wel apaied to haue pesen for his hyre,
And what Piers preide hem to do as prest as a Sperhawk. (B VI 183-96)

In Anima's speech 'faiten' is used to characterise religious mendicants as false lay beggars:

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For *per* are beggeris and bidderis, bedemen as it were,
 Loken as lambren and semen [lif]holy,
 Ac it is moore to haue hir mete [on] swich an esy manere
 Than for penaunce and *parfitnesse*, *pe* pouerte pat swiche takep.
 Therefore by colour ne by clergie knowe shaltow [hym] neuere,
 Neiper poru3 wordes ne werkes, but poru3 wil oone,
 And pat knowep no clerk ne creature on erpe
 But Piers *pe* Plowman, *Petrus id est christus*.
 For he [lyuep] no3t in lolleris ne in londleperis heremytes
 Ne at Ancres pere a box hangeþ; alle swiche pei faiten.
 Fy on faitours and in *fautores suos*! (B xv 205-15)

The sources and use of 'faitour' are a suggestive index of the emergence of the new vocabulary. 'Faitour' seems to have been established in Middle English in two related senses: in the general meaning of 'deceiver', 'imposter' or 'cheat', and in the specific meaning of a beggar who feigns sickness in order to obtain alms. Significantly, like several other terms used for the wasters, the probable source of the word is the language of civil law on vagrancy, for 'faitour' appears first in Anglo-Norman legal documents. A Commons Petition recorded in the Rolls of Parliament for 1376 complained of those 'faux faitours' who 'ne vullent labourer, mes par faiterie tapisent en Citees & Borghs pur eaise de lours corps'.¹⁰¹ This and one other legal example are the only examples of 'faitour' in this sense given by the *Anglo-Norman Dictionary*; the other is 'diverses gentz faitours e vagerantz de lieu en lieu', from the Statutes of the Realm. Other examples of vocabulary for beggars in the poem shared with the parliamentary documents are 'ouer-land strikares' (C ix 159; the Rolls of Parliament have 'stafstrikers'); 'ribaudie' (B Pro 44; 'fortz Rybaudes' in the Rolls); and 'Roberdes knaues' (B Pro 44; 'Roberdesmen' in the Rolls).¹⁰² *Piers Plowman* may have been the first English text where 'faitour' was brought into the debate over need, for the earliest *MED* examples are those in the poem. The subsequent growth of the word's importance in polemical language is suggested by evidence in the poem's manuscripts, and in other texts. Examples of the specific sense of '[act as] malingering beggar' are: B vii 95, 'And goon [and] faiten with [hire] fauntes for eueremoore after'; and B vi 121, 'Tho were faitours afered and feyned hem blynde'. Examples of 'faitour' in the general sense of 'imposter' or 'deceiver' are B ix 196, 'As fals folk, fondlynges, faitours and lieres', and B x 39, 'But poo pat feynen hem foolis, and wip faityng libbep' (referring to minstrels). Differences among the manuscripts and versions of the poem support the impression that 'faitour' had extended in meaning in association with the mendicancy controversy. In a C-text insertion into Piers's speech to the wasters, the wasters' offers of prayers are rejected:

'Ȝoure preyeres,' quod Peres, 'and ȝe parfyte weren,
 Myhte helpe, as y hope, ac hey Treuthe wolde
 That no faytrye were founde in folk pat goth a-beggeth...'
 (C viii 136-8)

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Similarly, 'faytour' seems to refer to all those who beg without need, and not merely malingerers, in the C-text version of the lines on needless begging in the exposition of the pardon, 'He is fals and faytour and defraudeth the neddy' (C ix 64).¹⁰³ There are several examples in the long C-text interpolations both of the extension of meaning and the association of the word with the friars: C v 30, 'Or faytest vppon Frydayes'; C ix 100, 'Thouh he falle for defaute pat fayteth for his lyflode'; and C ix 208, 'That faytede in frere clothinge hadde fatte chekes'. In the Prologue, some A-text manuscripts use 'fayed' in connection with idle beggars. This is the reading too of many B-text manuscripts, printed by Schmidt: 'Bidderes and beggeres ... Faiteden for hire fooode' (Schmidt, *B-Text*, Pro 40-2).¹⁰⁴ A curious variant in Pience's speech on solicitude has 'feytours' or 'faytour' instead of 'gyues' ('fettters'): 'Shul neuere gyues pee greue ne gret lordes wrape' (B xiv 53). The collocation 'Freres and Faitours' appears in the beta B-text manuscripts, where the alpha tradition, and the A- and C-texts have many variants instead of 'freres'.¹⁰⁵ This collocation, frequent in *Piers Plowman*, soon became part of anti-mendicant satire; another example is in the Wycliffite poem *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*: 'And foster none faytours ne swiche false freres'.¹⁰⁶ A medieval annotator of the C-text manuscript Douce 104 echoed this language in his notes: 'houu Pers spak to faytours' and 'nota de freres and faytowrs'.¹⁰⁷ Further evidence of the growing importance and polemical associations of the word is given by the passage quoted above from Trevisa's translation of FitzRalph's *Defensio Curatorum*. Translating the passage in which FitzRalph denied that Christ feigned need, Trevisa used the noun 'faytour' in place of FitzRalph's adjective 'fictus' and adverb 'fictē'.¹⁰⁸

The sources of the new vocabulary are instructive. Lay vagrancy became a matter for especial official concern and new legislation during the 1370s. Labour laws had been enacted in 1349 and 1351, that is, immediately the bubonic plague struck, but it was not until the 1370s, it seems, that the full effects of the plague on the labour market were felt. Fears about wage inflation and excessive labour mobility, as well as a labour shortage – for the plague had created a workers' labour market – seem to lie behind the concerns about lay vagrancy. The earlier laws were re-enacted in 1376, and the complaints about 'faitours' date from this time.¹⁰⁹ The new anticlerical perspective brought the problem of lay vagrancy together with that of religious mendicancy; thus the vocabulary of the legal documents was perfect for establishing this new point of view. Civil law, it is true, had been cited in earlier writings on religious mendicancy (there are examples in the *Contra Impugnantes* by Thomas Aquinas, and the *Roman de la Rose*), but the *Piers Plowman* examples are typical of the new importance of this approach to the question. Since the new anticlerical poverty polemic asserted the interests of the involuntary poor, the sham poor who damaged the interests of the true poor were attacked; thus lay vagrants and religious mendicants were linked. The Wycliffites especially investigated the implications of the civil law on beggary. Richard Maidstone cited a prohibition of begging in cities from the

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Corpus Juris Civilis as one of his Lollard opponents' main authorities.¹¹⁰ By the time of the Peasants' Revolt in 1381 the question of the relation between religious mendicancy and lay vagrancy had become especially heated. Writing to John of Gaunt, representatives of the orders of friars in Oxford claimed that Hereford and his followers had asserted publicly that the friars' idleness was a bad influence on 'rustici' who accordingly had become contemptuous of labour and had rebelled against their masters. It is notable in this context that the songs of the rebels seem, enigmatic though they are, to reject any association of their action with work-shy vagrancy, by alluding to an ethic of honest labour, when Piers the Ploughman is bid stay at home and work.¹¹¹ In view of all of these many facets of the question of labour, it is easy to understand why the '*ne solliciti sitis*' ethic proved so difficult to incorporate into the new anticlericalism.

The language of almsgiving also contributed to the new anticlerical language of poverty. This was the perfect language in which to consider the question of need from the new point of view. Earlier polemicists had sometimes referred to traditional teachings on almsgiving, as they had to the civil law on beggary, but again, it was only in the new polemic that these teachings became important. This was a suitable source of language for the new polemic because it provided an analysis of beggary, and a framework for definitions, which endorsed the claims of the true poor, simultaneously condemned voluntary or fraudulent begging, and emphasised the responsibility of the lay almsgiver to exercise his judgement. A passage on beggars unique to the B-text, and the conflict recorded in Maidstone's writings, share this language:

Beggeres [and] bidderes bep noȝt in þe bulle
But if þe suggestion be soop þat shapeþ hem to begge,
For he þat beggþ or bit, but he haue nede,
He is fals wip þe feend and defraudeþ þe nedy,
And [ek g]ileþ þe gyuere ageynes his wille.
For if he wiste he were noȝt nedy he wolde [it ȝyue]
Anoper that were moore nedy; so þe nedieste sholde be holpe.
Caton kennþ me þus and þe clerc of stories.
Cui des videto is Catons techyng,
And in þe stories he techþ to bistowe þyn almesse:
Sit elemosina tua in manu tua donec studes cui des.
Ac Gregory was a good man and bad vs gyuen alle
That askep for his loue þat vs al lenep:
Non eligas cui miser[e]aris ne forte pretereas illum qui meretur accipere,
Quia incertum est pro quo deo magis placeas. (B VII 65-77b)

Characteristically here the traditional topic of discrimination in almsgiving is used to assert the importance of need as a principle by which all begging should be judged. The authorities and arguments on the question of discrimination had been used by previous polemicists, but became particularly important in the late fourteenth-century stage of the conflict, explaining perhaps the close correspondence between the authorities used

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here and those used by Maidstone and his opponent. Bonaventure had used the traditional authorities for and against discrimination in his *quaestio* on mendicancy, opposing Luke 6:30, 'Give to everyone who asks you', with the text attributed in *Piers Plowman* to Peter Comestor. Bonaventure argued wittily that on the basis of Luke 6:30 all those seeking alms should receive them, but on the authority of '*Desudet eleemosyna in manu tua, donec invenias iustum, cui des*' ('Let your alms sweat in your hand, until you find a just man to whom you may give') religious mendicants were even more deserving of alms.¹¹² FitzRalph had emphasised the claims of the true poor, as with his interpretation of Luke 14:12-14; by the time of the Maidstone-Ashwardby conflict discrimination had become the central issue. As in the *Piers Plowman* example, Maidstone used the authority of Gregory the Great to counter the authority for the discrimination argument '*sudet eleemosyna in manu tua donec invenias iustum cui des*'.¹¹³ For the text against discrimination 'omnibus tribue; non eligas cui miserearis ne forte pretereas eum qui meretur accipere; incertum enim est pro quo magis placeas deo', cunningly used in *Piers Plowman* as an authority against false beggars who 'faiten' without need, Maidstone proposed an interpretation in favour of the mendicants.¹¹⁴ Its use by Maidstone indicates the success the anticlericals had achieved in making their opponents defend mendicancy in their own terms. The close association of almsgiving language with the traditions of the mendicancy polemic is also suggested in the *Piers Plowman* example by the appearance here of Ps. 37 [36]:25, '*Iunior fui etenim senui, & non vidi iustum derelictum ne[c] semen eius [querens panem]*' (B VII 89), as was noted earlier, a text widely used in polemical writings on religious mendicancy.¹¹⁵

The links made in the new polemic between lay vagrancy and religious mendicancy gave new significance to the language in which the question of manual labour for contemplatives had traditionally been discussed. This language might now be used both for lay and for religious idlers. The wasters, significantly, include both laymen who feign sickness to escape work ('*Somme leide hir le[g] aliry*', B VI 122), and those who claim exemption because of their religious profession, 'Postles' (B VI 149), 'Robert Renabouté' (B VI 148) and 'An heep of heremytes' (B VI 187), while in the C-text priests and friars are also mentioned, confirming and developing the broadly anticlerical potential of antimendicant language:

Prestes and oper peple towarde Peres they drowe
And freres of alle pe fyue ordres, alle for fere of Hunger.

(C VIII 190-1)

In *Piers Plowman* the texts and argument selected from the traditional polemic are characteristic of the new approach to poverty, for here are emphasised first principles derivable from natural law, as well as the apostolic precepts characteristic of the tradition. For FitzRalph, as for previous polemicists, Pauline texts such as 2 Thess. 3:10, 'the man who will not work shall not eat', were central in a traditional argument whose purpose was to

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show that religious mendicancy was non-apostolic.¹¹⁶ A growing awareness of the link between lay vagrancy and religious idleness is suggested by the insertion of this text in the margins of two *Piers Plowman* manuscripts beside the Prologue line on idlers, 'That Poul prechep of hem I [dar] nat preue it here' (B Pro 38).¹¹⁷ But the new argument was derived equally from first principles. Thus Hunger's authority for manual labour in *Piers Plowman* is Gen. 3:19:

In sudore and swynk pow shalt pi mete tilie
And labour for pi liflode, and so oure lord hiȝte. (B VI 233-4)

In the C-text a fuller quotation is given: '*In sudore* and *labore vultus tui vesceris pane tuo*' (C VIII 242a). The word 'labore' is not found here in the Vulgate, but its presence in the *Piers Plowman* quotation does emphasise the usual interpretation of the text in the polemical writings.¹¹⁸ The choice of the Genesis text is characteristic of the growing emphasis on natural law; thus Hunger associates the obligation to work with what 'Kynde wit wolde' (B VI 247), as well as what 'crist wolde' (B VI 249). Bonaventure, writing on the question of manual labour, had acknowledged Gen. 3:19 to be an authority from natural reason, but the question of labour in the state of innocence became particularly important with the new poverty polemic.¹¹⁹ Barthelemy of Bolsenheim, a Dominican friar who preached against FitzRalph at Avignon, argued that according to Gen. 3:17 labour was a consequence of sin; there had been no labour in the state of innocence.¹²⁰ In the Middle English *Rosarium Theologie*, a late fourteenth-century Wycliffite preachers' handbook, the antimendicant interpretation of Gen. 3:19 is reconciled with the doctrine of original dominion; labour was ordained both before the fall, and after it.¹²¹ Similar associations may explain the choice of the other authorities in the *Piers Plowman* passage: Prov. 20:4, quoted fully (but inaccurately) in the C-text, '*Piger propter frigus noluit arare; mendicabit in yeme et non dabitur ei*' (B VI 236-7; C VIII 246a); Ps. 128:2, '*Labores manuum tuarum*' (B VI 252a); and the parable of the talents.¹²²

The adaptation of the texts and authorities of the old polemic therefore gave access to a new significance for its language. The collocation 'Bolde beggeris' (B VI 213), used here to condemn both lay and religious beggars, may be accounted for as an English equivalent of 'validi mendicantes', the phrase characteristically used in polemical discussions of religious mendicancy. Thus the *explicit* to the treatise on the question in Bodley 52 describes it as a 'questio . . . pro et contra de validis mendicantibus', and William of St Amour's *quaestio* asks whether '*debeamus dare eleemosynam Valido Mendicanti, si sit pauper*' ('we ought to give alms to an able-bodied beggar, if he is poor').¹²³ It is more than a simple translation of a key term in the polemic, for the English 'Bolde beggeris' features a play on words which engages with an aspect of the issue the term had been introduced to discuss. The play is on the word 'bold'. The relevant meanings here are MED 5(a): 'Of persons: powerful, mighty; sturdy, strong', which translates 'validus', and MED 4(a):

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'Of persons: overconfident, forward, rash; brazen, presumptuous, shameless, impudent', which is much closer to the modern meaning, and which is how the *MED* and modern editors seem to have understood it.¹²⁴ The double meaning of 'sturdy' and 'brazen', makes 'bolde' a pejorative equivalent for the neutral 'validus'; establishing a position in the conflict over able-bodied beggars. The two meanings are exploited to create an ironic paradox in the C-text lines:

Was no beggare so bold, but yf a blynd were,
Pat durste withsitte pat Peres sayde for fere of syre Hunger.

(C VIII 201-2)

The collocation is used as a subject-heading in the tradition of marginal annotation found in Oriel 79 and Cambridge University Library Ll 4 14, suggesting that the phrase soon entered the language of the poem's readers.¹²⁵

If language was the battlefield in the conflicts over poverty, then everywhere in the linguistic *minutiae* of the *Piers Plowman* manuscripts are the scars left by the battle. Substantial variation among manuscripts, revisions, even marginal annotations, can all tell the story of how a new polemical language was made. Evidence such as this confirms the importance of language for the poverty controversies, and that language was the arena where the making of *Piers Plowman* became a part of the drama. Manuscript variants, in particular, often seem to have been generated by the volatility and sensitivity of the subject of poverty. To variants already mentioned such as those associated with the '*ne solliciti sitis*' passages, or 'bide' in Nede's speech, should be added other variants which strikingly engage with the controversy over evangelical poverty. Such variants indicate the controversial nature of the subject for the poem's scribes and readers, and frequently a perception of a need to revise the poem. For example, where most B-text manuscripts have 'Ac by clothyng thei knewe hym noght, ne by carpyng of tonge' (Schmidt, *B-Text*, xi 237), Kane and Donaldson suspected censorship of the reference to Christ's extreme poverty in the C-text version, and emended on that basis to 'so caitifliche he yede' (B xi 239).¹²⁶ Ymaginatif's reference to the poverty of Christ's birthplace in the following passus is also associated with variation and revision. In some manuscripts Ymaginatif refutes the claim that Christ was born in a beggar's cottage:

Ne in none [beggars] cote [n]as pat barn born,
But in a Burgeises place, of Bethlem pe beste:
Set non erat ei locus in diuersorio, et pauper non habet diuersorium.

(B XII 146-7a)

However, one manuscript has 'burgeises cote' for 'beggars cote' in the first line, and the C-text has 'caytyfs hous' (C xiv 90), both of which variants eliminate the association of Christ with a beggar. Some manuscripts of both B- and C-texts omit the lines entirely. Kane and Donaldson attributed defective alliteration here in the B-text to the controversial subject matter.¹²⁷

Variation such as this may reflect uncertainty and shifts in the anticlerical interpretation of the biblical text. A controversial context for this interpretation is suggested by the treatment of the text Luke 2:7 in a Wycliffite sermon. Whereas Ymaginatif uses the text to prove that Christ was no pauper, contrastingly in this sermon it is interpreted as evidence for Christ's poverty.¹²⁸ But the Wycliffite reading of this text may itself have been revised. The Early Version of the Wycliffite Bible translates 'there was not place to him in the common stable', whereas the Later Version has 'there was no place to him in no chamber'.¹²⁹ A variant in the Rechelesnesse interpolation is particularly noteworthy. Where Pearsall printed 'Oure prince Iesu pouerte chees' (C XIII 3), Huntington Library HM 114 has 'Our prins Iesu his disciples chese', eliminating the association of Christ with voluntary poverty.¹³⁰ This manuscript shares with the highly variant B-text manuscript F a radical paraphrase of the sensitive and crucial text Luke 14:12-14. Where most manuscripts read 'callep pe carefulle perto, pe croked and pe pouere' (B XI 192), these manuscripts substitute 'bly3nde' for 'pouere' recalling the unambiguous wording characteristic of the radical antimendicant tradition.¹³¹ B-text manuscript F is characterised by heavy intervention in the poverty passages. The variant 'bowe' for 'bide' in Nede's speech has already been noted; to this should be added examples from passus XI. Here F omits the lines which refer to Christ in a poor man's apparel and those on the poverty of Mary and Joseph, reduces and alters the lines on faith in God's provision and diminishes the authority of Matt. 19:21 by substituting 'Anoper poete seyp in his pure speche' for 'Wiser pan Salomon was berep witnesse and tau3te' (B XI 271).¹³²

It would be difficult and hazardous to interpret such variants in detail, and without full study of each individual manuscript, but the general implication is clear, that the poverty polemic in *Piers Plowman* was part of the wider conflict over the language of poverty, and as such, was subject to tinkering and change. The general trend of the C-text revisions may perhaps be characterised with more confidence. The tendency in the C-text towards a broader and more fully developed anticlericalism is clearly illustrated by the treatment of poverty here. The inclusion of priests as well as friars among the wasters, and the development of poverty exegesis in Rechelesnesse's speech, already mentioned, illustrate this. The Rechelesnesse poverty interpolation develops further the notion of the relation between rich and poor, and of their differing obligations. Here the rich (figured by the merchant) are not condemned, but advised to give alms; clerical 'merchants' however ('That chaffaren as chapmen', C XII 226), who illicitly retain property, are attacked, and priests exhorted to conform to poverty.¹³³ The idea of two kinds of law – human law, and natural or divine law – which underpinned the new poverty polemic, is exploited further here. Characteristic of the C-text account of evangelical poverty is that the poor are exempt from human law, but conform to divine law. Just as the hayward has no jurisdiction over the poor messenger, so those who live by alms 'Beth nat ybounde as beth 3e ryche to

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bowe to pe lawes' (C XIII 79).¹³⁴ Here the metaphor for poverty without solicitude found in the B-text, '*absque sollicitudine semita*' (B XIV 276,309), is combined with the notion of liberation from human law, '*Necessitas non habet legem*' (C XIII 43a), to express a new account of poverty.

The attribution of the poverty speech in the C-text to Rechelesnesse may be connected with this notion of freedom from human law. As such, it represents another attempt to integrate the problematic '*ne solliciti sitis*' ethic with the new polemic. Besides the familiar pejorative sense of 'negligent', 'reckless' was applied more specifically to a religious who disregarded his rule. Examples occur in a passage exclusive to the A-text, 'And riȝt so be romberis pat rennen aboute Fro religioun to religioun, reccheles ben pei euer' (A x 105-6), and in Chaucer's portrait of the apostate Monk, 'a monk, whan he is recchelees, Is likned til a fissh that is waterlees'.¹³⁵ Discussing the word 'reckless' Donaldson noted the 'etymological potential' of the verb 'to reck' for producing non-pejorative derivatives.¹³⁶ 'Recklessness' might therefore have been used to endorse heedlessness of that human law which is a religious rule. There is evidence for a shift of focus in the conflict over religious mendicancy which may account for this new emphasis. FitzRalph's emphasis on original lordship opened the way for a devaluing of any simply human law. As developed by Wyclif, this became the basis for an attack on the very concept of the religious rule. This may in part explain why the question of whether need might be voluntary seems to have given ground to the question of whether it might be vowed; as when Maidstone complained that Ashwardby was attacking those who begged 'valide, habitualiter, spontanee' ('in good health, regularly, voluntarily'). In this view, only reckless, unwowed, poverty was truly not solicitous.¹³⁷

Local and large-scale revisions such as these suggest engagement with the shifts of the conflict over poverty. They might also support the view held by some modern readers that there may be discerned in *Piers Plowman* an effort to avoid too close identification with a Wycliffite version of the poverty polemic which was fast becoming associated with heresy.¹³⁸ Thus, for example, the Wycliffites were impugned for denying a literal interpretation of Christ's teaching on renunciation. It is precisely a literal interpretation of these precepts which is an important part of the poverty polemic in *Piers Plowman*, yet this literal interpretation serves a purpose similar to that of the Wycliffite account.¹³⁹ But even if this is correct, there can be no support for the view sometimes associated with this interpretation of the C-text revisions, that the language of the poverty polemic in *Piers Plowman* is used ironically.¹⁴⁰ The language of the poverty polemic was to be captured, not to be derided. The marginal annotations in the manuscripts give further support here. They confirm the impression given by local and large-scale revisions of the growth and emergence of a new language of poverty, suggesting that the poverty polemic was authoritative for its early readers, and its language one that they were beginning to share. There is no evidence that, say, attribution of the praise of poverty to Rechelesnesse was felt by early readers to

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undermine the authority of the poverty polemic. Thus poverty subject-headings, 'paupertas' and 'nota de pauperie', occur beside Rechelesnesse's praise of poverty in Digby 102 and Cambridge University Library Ff 5 35 respectively, and *notas* in Digby 102 and Cambridge University Library Dd 3 13.¹⁴¹ Again, the Luke 14:12–14 passage is marked 'notate hyer how 3e schull make festes' in Huntington Library HM 143 and 'nota de men pat makyth festys' and 'pe lawe of lowe' in Douce 104.¹⁴² In Cambridge University Library Dd 1 17 the passage on Christ's poverty is heavily annotated with *notas*.¹⁴³ A similar interest in and sympathy with the poverty polemic is apparent in marginal annotation for Pacience's speech. Pacience's exposition of the text '*Paupertas . . . est odibile bonum*' is marked 'hyere 3e may se it is god to be pouere' in Huntington Library HM 143; '*Distinctio paupertatis*' in Cambridge University Library Ff 5 35; and 'paupertas' in Digby 102; in addition there are many *notas* in Cambridge University Library Dd 1 17 and Dd 3 13, Huntington Library HM 114, Digby 102 and Huntington Library HM 143.¹⁴⁴ To examples already mentioned of annotation which reveals a participation by readers in the language of the polemic, such as the insertion of controversial biblical texts in OC² (Oriel 79 and Cambridge University Library Ll 4 14), or the use of the terms 'faitour' and 'bold beggars' in annotations, should be added others. In Douce 104 the need sequence is marked '[nota] de nede hath no lawe' and 'nota de ned'; in Oriel 79 '[ne]cessitas'.¹⁴⁵ In some manuscripts the wasters sequence is heavily annotated. Douce 104 has 'nota de Hongyr to wreck Pers apon wasturs', 'houu Pers bad Hongyr go home' and 'houu Hongyre was fed dentesly'.¹⁴⁶ Oriel 79 and Cambridge University Library Ll 4 14 have 'Of ydel beggers', 'Of heremytes', 'nota how beggers & wastouris been chastised', 'Catoun of almes dedis' and 'Of false beggeris'.¹⁴⁷

POVERTY AND INTELLECTUAL DOMINION

I fond pere Freres, alle pe fourde ordres,
Prechyng pe peple for profit of [pe wombe];
Glosed pe gospel as hem good liked;
For coueitise of copes construwed it as pei wolde. (B Pro 58–61)

As defined by St Francis, living in evangelical poverty was a simple and wholehearted response to scripture. Franciscan renunciation of property was equally a renunciation of intellectual dominion in this respect, because this fullest realisation of evangelical teaching and example was incompatible with some traditional ways of reading scripture. Evangelical poverty was thus associated with what was in effect a kind of anti-intellectualism, and clerical property with the illicit assertion of intellectual dominion. This is illustrated by the way antifraternal topics such as the 'master' theme, and jibes about the friars' books and pupils, were used to show that intellectual dominion was a transgression of evangelical poverty. This idea of illicit intellectual dominion was a powerful weapon in the conflict over the interpretation of evangelical

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poverty, at first for the antifraternal cause, and later for the new anticlericalism itself. Clerics who resisted the anticlerical interpretation of evangelical poverty, or who questioned their opponents' choice and use of language, were open to the charge that their counter-interpretations and arguments were founded on the illicit assertion of dominion, intellectual and temporal. This had special implications for the creation of an English anticlerical vocabulary of poverty, and for the development of an antifraternal, later broadly anticlerical, interpretation of scripture. Underlying principles and practices, as well as conclusions, were the subject of conflict.

The development of a literary theory appropriate for the new anticlericalism, and the implications of this for English literature, must await another study. Here it is possible only to note some of the evidence for this wider dimension. It was Francis's prohibition of 'glossing', and his insistence on a simple, unintellectual realisation of the gospel, which united poverty with a kind of anti-intellectualism. With the Franciscan theory of poverty came the notion that to fail to observe evangelical poverty rigorously was to 'gloss' it. This notion arose because the Franciscan Rule was held to be not like that of the other religious orders, but to be the record of the revelation that the life of Christ and the apostles, as recorded in the gospel, was to be lived. Accordingly, St Francis had prohibited forever any glossing of his Rule or Testament, and this prohibition was repeated in *Exiit qui seminat*. To depart from rigorous observance of evangelical poverty, as laid down by the Franciscan Rule, was therefore to be guilty of illegitimate 'glossing' of, in effect, the gospel.¹⁴⁸ Accordingly, when the new theory of evangelical poverty was put forward in the later fourteenth century, those who challenged this interpretation of the gospel, in word or deed, were 'glosers'. To the charge that polemicists were misrepresenting the gospel in English (as in the case of Luke 14:12-14), FitzRalph and his followers might reply that they relied on the literal text, not the 'glose'.

The friars' intellectual and literary principles and practices had been exploited for antifraternal purposes as far back as the conflict in Paris in the mid thirteenth century. Their case was not aided by the tendentious, pro-fraternal, interpretation made by the Franciscan Gerard of Borgo San Donnino of the prophecies of Joachim of Fiore, which inaugurated the scandal of the Everlasting Gospel. It can hardly have been without irony that William of St Amour attempted to forestall any objections to his *De Periculis* (exegesis of 2 Tim. 3 with satirical allusions to Gerard's exegesis) 'per disputationem & altercationem philosophicam, aut sophisticam' ('through philosophical or sophistical debate and disputation'). He announced that he would only listen to 'collationem Catholicam' ('Catholic collation [of scriptural texts]').¹⁴⁹ A preference for pagan philosophers over Christian authors, and especially for the writings of Averroes, the twelfth-century Arabic commentator on Aristotle, was among the charges made against the Dominican friars in 1277 by the Bishop of Paris, with the support of the secular clergy. Friars teaching the views of Averroes were denounced in both

England and France. The Bishop of Paris, aided by the secular clergy, produced a list of errors, among them the use of Averroes, which he had found in the teachings of Aquinas and other Dominican friars. The list was published in England in 1277 by the Dominican Robert Kilwardby, Aquinas's enemy, and by the Franciscan John Pecham in 1284 and 1286.¹⁵⁰ These condemnations were renewed c.1349–50, when Clement VI warned the University of Paris against departure from scripture and patristic authors. FitzRalph seems to have followed this warning, despite an earlier interest in Averroes. He based his *Summa de Questionibus Armenorum* almost wholly on scripture, more precisely, on what he thought of as the literal sense, and dedicated the work to Clement VI.¹⁵¹ Again, in his 'Autobiographical Prayer', FitzRalph announced his return to scripture and his rejection of 'garriencium philosophorum' ('chattering philosophers').¹⁵²

Since the issue of intellectual authority was so closely associated with the prohibition of glossing, it is not surprising that a central charge against friars, and more generally against any clerics who resisted the new interpretation of poverty, was that of 'glosing'. The satirical topic of 'glosing' has often been noticed by readers of Middle English literature. The thumb-nail sketch of the glossing preachers in the Prologue of *Piers Plowman* is well known, and perhaps even more familiar is the appearance of the topic in Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*: 'I ne have no text of it, as I suppose, But I shal fynde it in a maner glose'.¹⁵³ But the implications of the topic have not been understood. For example, the *Summoner's Tale* instance has been explained by critics such as Mann, Williams and Hanning as a traditional jibe at the friar's learning and studied eloquence.¹⁵⁴ Fleming noticed a connection with the history of the poverty dispute, but despite this, concluded that *glossing* was not an object of satire in the *Summoner's Tale*, only the friar's false claim to spiritual understanding, that is, his claim to the authority to gloss.¹⁵⁵ But the contextual evidence provides for a more pointed and meaningful satire.

In his First London Sermon FitzRalph told how he bet his bible that no-one could find a biblical text supporting Christ's mendicancy, and how his opponent – possibly Roger Conway – who replied the following week said 'solum textum repexi, non glosas' ('I had only looked at the text, not the glosses').¹⁵⁶ FitzRalph also used the proscription against glossing the Franciscan Rule as a way of asserting the obligation of absolute poverty for friars, as for example in the Fourth London Sermon. FitzRalph took Eph. 5:6 for his text here: 'Nemo vos seducat inanibus verbis' ('Let no-one mislead you with empty words'), making the themes of 'glosing' and associated forms of linguistic trickery the backbone of this sermon.¹⁵⁷ This famous and widely circulated Fourth London Sermon was doubtless of great importance in bringing the theme of false, self-seeking, uses of language into the centre of the later fourteenth-century controversies, for here FitzRalph reinterpreted William's parodic exegesis of 2 Tim. 3 in the light of Eph. 5:6, making each of the old antifraternal topics illustrations of the central charge. The fundamental charge against the friars was for FitzRalph – as it had been for the

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Franciscan Spirituals – departure from literal observance of the Rule. He therefore treated the topics of 2 Tim. 3 as images of the friars’ ‘glosing’, combining the signs of the religious hypocrite with the text of his sermon Eph. 5:6, ‘Nemo vos seducat inanibus verbis.’ For example, the *penetrantes domos* topic (2 Tim. 3:6) became an image of ‘glosing’. The friars’ lechery was another manifestation of their verbal hypocrisy; they were false preachers who preached chastity, and were thought to be chaste, but their words were empty and misleading:

‘Penetrant domos et mulierculas ducant [*sic*] captiuas oneratas peccatis’ ... quia castitatem publice predicantes casti a populo reputantur, de isto genere hominum decipientium ‘verbis inanibus’ vobis cauere suadeo, vt ‘Nemo vos seducat inanibus verbis’.¹⁵⁸

(‘They intrude into houses and take captive women laden with sin’ ... because they preach chastity publicly, they are reputed chaste by the people; I urge you to beware of deceivers ‘with empty words’ of this kind, that ‘no-one mislead you with empty words’.)

Perhaps B-text manuscript Oriel 79 reflects this new focus of the topic in the annotation of ‘sire *Penetrans domos*’ with ‘ffrere flaterer’.¹⁵⁹ It seems that the charge of ‘glosing’ was applied to Maidstone’s interpretation of evangelical poverty, in his conflict with Ashwardby over the definitions of key words. Thus, when discussing the meaning of Augustine’s gloss on Luke 6:30 in his *Determinatio*, he defended his interpretation, it seems against the charge that he had extorted or wrenched (‘per violenciam’) his interpretation from Augustine’s words.¹⁶⁰

This conjunction between false words, deceiving lay people and false poverty is apparent in the treatment of the Great Doctor, whose hypocrisy is related to his ‘glosing’:

Holi writ bit men be war – I wol noȝt write it here
In englissh on auenture it sholde be reherced to ofte,
And greue *perwip* [pat goode ben] – ac gramariens shul re[d]e:
Vnusquisque a fratre se custodiat quia vt dicitur periculum est in falsis
fratribus.
Ac I wiste neuere freke *pat* as a frere yede bifore men on englissh
Taken it for his teme and telle it wipouten glosyng.
They prechen *pat* penaunce is profitable to pe soule,
And what meschief and maleese crist for man poledē,
‘Ac pis goddes gloton’, quod I, ‘wip hise grete chekes
Hap no pite on vs pouere; he *parfournep* yuele
That he prechep [and] preuep noȝt [com]paciēce’, I tolde. (B XIII 71–80)

Here the ‘glosing’ theme is wittily combined with the apostle’s warning against false brethren at 2 Cor. 11:26, neatly playing on the friar/brother double meaning of ‘fratribus’. A detail particularly suggestive of the significance and context of the Great Doctor satire in the debate over intellectual dominion is the reference to his authority ‘Seint Auereys’:

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For now he hap dronken so depe he wole deuyne soone
And preuen it by hir Pocalips and passion of Seint Auereys
That neiper bacon ne braun, blancmanger ne mortrews,
Is neiper fissh n[e] flessh, but fode for a penaunt. (B XIII 90-3)

Traditionally, editors have identified 'Seint Auereys' with St Aurea, or St Avoya, but the form of the name, and the satirical context, make it likely that this is an allusion to Averroes.¹⁶¹ Dignifying the pagan philosopher with sainthood is of course satirical, pointing up the objection to the use of Averroes, which was that such pagans were arrogantly preferred to Christian authors.

Nemo Vos Seducat had already shown how the theme of illicit intellectual dominion could be fully integrated with the new approach to the friars; in the period which followed this was further developed, and exploited for broadly anticlerical purposes. It was partly their pastoral activities which made the friars 'glosers' of poverty. The semantic association of 'glosing' with a traditional topic against friar-confessors was exploited in English texts to show how friars were 'glosers' in two related ways. In the sense of 'to use fair words' and 'to address with fair or deceptive words', 'glose', especially in the phrase 'maken glose', and the derivative verb 'glosen', seem to have been well established in Middle English. Similarly, the noun 'glose' meaning 'gloss' was usual. However, the more specific pejorative sense of 'glose' as a false interpretation of a text seems to be new in the late fourteenth century, when it is associated with new derivatives 'gloser', 'glosing' (verbal noun), and 'glosen' in the sense 'to gloss'.¹⁶² But 'glosen' still continued to have its older meaning, almost as a synonym for 'flatter', as in *The Book of Vices and Virtues*: 'synne pat clerkes clepen adulacion, pat is glosynge or flaterynge'.¹⁶³ Antifraternal writers seem to have exploited the proximity of 'glose' ('gloss') with this old pejorative sense, in order to load with disapproval the friars' glossing, and to develop the old theme of friars' flattery. Both activities involve using words falsely; the glossing preacher misrepresents the meaning of scriptural and other texts, while the glossing confessor flatters penitents, especially by 'glossing over' their sins. Thus the words 'glose' and 'flatter' became associated in English satirical writings, as in *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*, where 'glose' is frequent in both senses, and is found in association with 'flatter'.¹⁶⁴ The instances in *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede* are examples of how 'glose' grew in meaning and importance in Lollard writing; Chaucer seems to have played ironically on its Lollard associations in the so-called *Shipman's Prologue*, where it is said of the 'Lollere' Parson 'He schal no gospel glosen here ne teche'.¹⁶⁵

In *Piers Plowman* the changes in use of 'glose' and its derivatives, from one version of the poem to another, reflect the changing status of the word. There are several examples of the word in its new pejorative sense of 'false interpretation', with antifraternal, and more generally anticlerical, implications. In passus iv B-text manuscripts have 'Late 3owre confessoure, sire kynge construe this vnglosed' (Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, B iv 145), which has

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both 'confession' and 'preaching' implications, where the A- and C-texts seem to agree against 'vnglosed' with 'pee on englissh'.¹⁶⁶ Whether the B-text represents authorial revision or scribal variation, the reading shows the growing use of the term, and the link between an 'unglosed' text and English. Although the C-text seems to omit this example, the corresponding C-text passage includes the line spoken by Resoun to confessors, 'Ne gete my grace thorw eny gyfte ne glosynge speche' (C iv 138), where 'glosynge' could have subsumed subtly both of the satirical charges made rather more pointedly in the B-text. Examples of the topic in *Piers Plowman* include both the specifically antifraternial and the broadly anticlerical. The 'curatours' in Antichrist's church are 'flatereris and gloseris' (B xix 221), and 'frere Flaterere' (B xx 315) 'goop and gaderep and glosep pere he shryuep' (B xx 368).

Charity: the ground of anticlericalism

CHARITY AND CLERICAL DOMINION

‘What is holy church, chere frende?’ quod y. ‘Charite,’ he saide . . .

(C XVII 125)

In the new anticlericalism, clerical dominion was defined in terms of charity. Charity was the key to political action for the anticlericals. For if the delinquency of the clergy was manifest in their departure from evangelical poverty, nevertheless poverty alone could not provide the authority for a remedy. Opposition was an assertion of dominion not authorised by poverty. But *charity* opened the way to political assertion against the clergy. For charity provided an understanding of the disposition of dominion within the church, an account of the role both of those who were clergy and those who were not. Charity at once divested the clergy of civil dominion, and invested the anticlericals with the authority and powers to bring them to that state of poverty. And charity provided authority for this assertion of power not merely because it authorised a disposition of dominion within the church, but also because it gave the temporal assertion of political power a place in salvation history. It brought into relation as valid anticlerical acts the assertion of political dominion against the clergy, and the final overthrowing of Antichrist’s church; the reduction of the clergy to poverty, and the restoration to grace won by the passion. Charity, therefore, not poverty, was the full remedy for illicit clerical dominion; it was both the authority for correction, and the end of correction; a pristine, and final, state. Thus anticlericalism was grounded in charity.

The act of charity was the paradigm for the proper relation between clergy and laity. So clerical possession became the focus of the conflict over dominion and, for the anticlericals, the visible manifestation and symbol of illicit clerical dominion. Acts of donation to the clergy became the focus for the discussion of the laity’s political power and responsibility. Charity defined the way clerics held possessions: just as the Franciscans’ receipt of alms implied only natural, not civil dominion, over them, so the clergy had no civil dominion over goods in their possession. The lay involvement in charity, through almsgiving and other donations, defined the lay political interest and power. Like ill-gotten gains, possessions wrongfully acquired or retained by the clergy must be restored, and the lay donor, like every almsgiver, had a

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responsibility for supervising the placing and use of his charity. The exercise of responsibility, from the denial of alms to an undeserving mendicant to complete disendowment by the crown, was a political act against illicit clerical dominion, authorised by charity. The departure from charity, and the political restoration of the clergy to a state in accord with charity, were events of human history seen in the context of salvation history. Clerical acquisition of civil dominion was traced to a calamitous act of charity: endowment of the church by Constantine. The reversal of the harm done by this event was expected to occur in the closing phase of history, and to generate a conflict to be associated with the final upheavals of the apocalypse.

The new anticlerical politics gave rise to debate over the relationship between lay and clerical dominion, and the authority for correction of the clergy. The poles and focus of the conflict were dictated by the new anticlericalism, but the arguments used were adapted from the earlier controversies over pastoral care and poverty. The theory of poverty, as developed by the polemicists among the secular clergy, provided the intellectual basis for attacks on the civil dominion of the clergy. At their most extreme, such attacks resulted in demands for correction of the clergy by disendowment by the temporal lords, as in Anima's speech:

Whan Costantyn of curteisie holy kirke dowed
Wip londes and ledes, lordshipes and rentes,
An Aungel men herden an heigh at Rome crye,
'*Dos ecclesie* pis day hap ydronke venym
And po pat han Petres power arn apoisoned alle.'
A medicine moot perto pat may amende prelates.
That sholden preie for pe pees, possession hem lettep;
Takep hire landes, ye lordes, and letep hem lyue by dymes.
If possession be poison and inparfite hem make
[Charite] were to deschargen hem for holy chirches sake,
And purgen hem of poison er moore peril falle. (B xv 557-67)

In another well-known disendowment passage in *Piers Plowman*, Clergie prophesies 'a knok of a kyng' (B x 332) for the Abbot of Abingdon and all his successors. Such demands contributed greatly to the fame of the poem at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries in the sixteenth century, and ever since a link has been suspected between the poem's disendowment prophecies and the proposals and doctrines of Wyclif and his followers.¹ The antifraternal FitzRalph has long been seen as the source for their theory.

Ever since Poole printed FitzRalph's *De Pauperie Salvatoris* as an appendix to Wyclif's *De Dominio Divino*, historians have recognised that Wyclif owed the intellectual basis of his disendowment argument to the earlier antifraternal polemicist FitzRalph. There seems to be no reason to challenge this traditional view that Wyclif relied heavily on FitzRalph's doctrine of dominion, and that therefore his disendowment politics grew out of the conflict over pastoral care. Yet, although historians have acknowledged the *historical* importance of the doctrine of dominion for Wyclif, for his followers and for

their opponents, they have begun to question its *intellectual* importance as an element in Wyclif's philosophical system. For if FitzRalph's doctrine was little different from that held by Giles of Rome, then the authority for the disendowment position was the argument that dominion over property is lost as a result of sin. Recently there has been a growing perception that this argument was not an integral part of Wyclif's thought. Wilks, for example, found two different theories of dominion in Wyclif, and Lambert considered dominion to be overshadowed by Wyclif's theory of predestination.² Therefore the importance of FitzRalph for Wyclif, and the debt of the disendowment debate to the earlier conflicts, remain, in this account, unclear.

Improved understanding of FitzRalph's theory of dominion exposes even further the inadequacies of the traditional account. For, as we have seen, FitzRalph's theory of dominion was founded largely on the Franciscan theory of poverty, and only indirectly and superficially on the doctrine of dominion used by Giles of Rome. But this improved understanding of FitzRalph's doctrine provides the basis for a more satisfactory account of the new anticlerical position. It should be clear from the discussions of the conflicts over pastoral care and poverty that the position held by FitzRalph was that the friars should have no civil dominion, and by his anticlerical followers that the clergy should not have civil dominion. FitzRalph argued that the friars should be stripped of their pastoral offices, not because they had sinfully abused their privileges, but because their claim to those privileges was an improper assertion of civil dominion. The implications of this argument for any assertion of civil dominion by clerics, and the symbolic importance of that most sensitive of issues, property ownership, are clear. They are present in embryo in the treatment of friars as possessioners, a waged order, child-stealers, book-owners and purchasers of knowledge.

From the decades preceding Wyclif's attack on clerical possession comes evidence for the beginnings of this doctrine. Such evidence shows how the challenge to clerical possession emerged from the earlier debates over pastoral care and poverty.³ From the FitzRalph period itself comes shadowy evidence for a controversy in the Oxford schools over the authority by which the clergy held property. One well-known story concerns 'Frater Johannes', an Oxford friar who was accused of having asserted that the king might deprive the clergy of their wealth, and that tithes were owed to friars, rather than to the secular clergy.⁴ This event is known only from an undated document which preserves the text of the recantation demanded by the University Chancellor and Masters, but it is easy to see how the conflict over pastoral care at the time of FitzRalph could have provided the context for such a controversy. The conflict over pastoral care produced arguments which called into question the rights of the secular clergy to tithes. When the secular clergy attacked the friars' laxity in restitution – for themselves and for penitents – the friars questioned the authority by which the seculars claimed the right to tithes.⁵ This link between the disendowment argument attributed to 'Frater Johannes' and the FitzRalph controversy is supported by a letter to FitzRalph from the University Chancellor and Masters, which may well refer

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to the same incident.⁶ In this letter (which probably should be dated 1358) concern was expressed that the FitzRalph controversy had given rise to controversy in the schools. In particular, it was claimed that someone had determined against the possessioners, arguing that the clergy's property should be seized and tithes transferred to the friars.⁷ Such controversies are not surprising; the polemical writers themselves had nearly brought out this implication. Writers on both sides acknowledged that Franciscan poverty impugned an endowed clergy, only they had not yet drawn the political conclusion. For example, FitzRalph argued in his *Defensio Curatorum* that endowment was an authority against that poverty which resulted in clerical mendicancy, and Barthelemy of Bolsenheim, in his reply, acknowledged that authorities for clerical endowment, such as the Old Testament laws concerning tithes for priests, seemed to be support for the antimendicant position.⁸

Well-known examples of high anticlerical feeling in the early 1370s confirm the impression that the friars considered disendowment a useful weapon in their favour for some time after the FitzRalph conflict. Thus the Ashbourne and Bankyn affair of 1371 and the Great Council of 1373 show how friars continued to challenge the clergy's dominion over property. But the exploitation of the antifraternal argument as a broadly anticlerical weapon gave the friars and the possessioners common cause. The endowed clergy were moved to examine and counter FitzRalph's theory of dominion, while the friars, their former opponents, turned to monastic arguments to defend themselves. The possessioners and the mendicants alike were obliged to argue that the clergy might legitimately have civil dominion, in order to resist the derogation of all their political dominion to secular powers. An important element in this strategy was the notion of poverty with common possessions, which, as we have seen, was used to counter arguments based by the anticlericals on the Franciscan theory of poverty. Possessioners and mendicants were obliged to show that communal property was the tradition of the church from its beginnings. Entrenched positions in the old conflict had to be abandoned as attention shifted to the new, common, front against lay power.

The Benedictine monk Uthred mounted a defence of clerical possession to show that ecclesiastical authority was in all things superior to secular authority. His polemic dates from the time of Wyclif's *De Civili Dominio*, although he was perhaps developing arguments already used against the friars. For the *Eulogium Historiarum Continuation* account of the Great Council of 1373 says he defended the proposition that the pope was lord of all, and proved that Peter had wielded the two swords of temporal and spiritual power, with the text 'Ecce duo gladii hic'.⁹ In his treatise *Contra Garrulos Dotacionem Ecclesie Impugnantes* he maintained a similar position, this time, however, probably against the Wycliffites, whereas in 1373 his opponent had been the Franciscan Mardisley. In this treatise Uthred examined the nature of the dominion the church held over its endowments, asserting that even in cases where the crown seized temporalities to correct the clergy this did not necessarily also imply that the crown had dominion

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over those temporalities.¹⁰ Both Uthred and his fellow-Benedictine Adam Easton seem to have attempted to refute the antipossessioner position by examining the theories upon which FitzRalph's doctrine was based. Adam Easton's *Defensorium Ecclesie* was produced after study of the writings of political theorists on clerical and secular dominion. Both Easton and Uthred turned to pro-papal theories such as that of Giles of Rome in order to defend the church.¹¹ Then the friars, who formerly had been opponents of the monks, began to see that a defence against the broader implications of FitzRalph's doctrine meant that their interests coincided with those of their former opponents. In response to Wycliffite doctrine friars such as Hardeby and Woodford issued treatises refuting the FitzRalph thesis, using these arguments to support clerical authority. Hardeby's *De Vita Evangelica*, issued during the time of the Wycliffite challenge, was based on refutations of FitzRalph developed during the earlier debate; likewise, Woodford's *Defensorium Mendicitatis*, issued against the Wycliffites, was a reply to FitzRalph's *De Pauperie Salvatoris*.

When charity provided the grounds for correction in the political arena, it provided in *Piers Plowman* a language in which the utopian church and the achievement of it might be discussed. The old conflicts over monastic possession, and over the friars' privileges and poverty, provided traditions of polemic adaptable to this new service. In the poem, the language and topics of the old conflicts are adapted to reveal the new understanding of clerical dominion, and the grounds for clerical correction. The metaphor authorised immediate political action. It also supplied that action with a place in salvation history. Traditions of history and prophecy, formerly associated with the poverty conflicts among the orders, were adapted to the new anticlericalism.

'AD PRISTINUM STATUM IRE'

Ac þer shal come a kyng and confesse yow Religioyses,
And bete yow, as þe bible telleþ, for brekyng of youre rule,
And amende Monyals, Monkes and Chanons,
And puten [hem] to hir penaunce, *Ad pristinum statum ire* . . .

(B x 322-5)

The removal of civil lordship from clerics was expressed by the enemies of the possessioners as returning the clergy to a former, pristine, state. For example, in *De Civili Dominio* Wyclif argued that to remove civil lordship from the clergy would be 'reducere ad pristinam dignitatem' ('to return them to their original status').¹² Uthred of Boldon claimed that a devil inspired those who taught that secular powers should restore the church to the pious and holy condition of the primitive church ('ecclesiam reducere ad deuotum et sanctum statum ecclesie primitiue').¹³ A similar phrase occurs in the *Eulogium Historiarum*, in a commentary on a prophecy of a just king who will reduce the clergy 'in statum pristinum'.¹⁴ Such a historical understanding of

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correction was in accordance with the anticlerical theory of dominion, for according to this theory there had originally been no civil property, either before the fall or in the primitive church. Removal of clerical lordship therefore constituted restoration to an earlier state. In *Piers Plowman* this earlier state is treated in accordance with the grounds for the reduction of the clergy. Historical traditions had already been an important element in the recent conflicts between monks and friars over poverty. From these traditions of polemical history were selected and adapted themes and topics suitable for basing the argument for the reduction of the clergy on the new ground of charity.

Specific examples illustrate the changing importance of traditions of historical polemic. The Monk of Bury's Treatise, a work primarily devoted to monastic history and tradition, seems, in the middle of the fourteenth century, to have been associated with the dispute between the old endowed orders and the friars. The defensive nature of the treatise itself suggests its link with controversy; changes in companion texts index a shift in how its implications were perceived. The earliest extant manuscript, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana MS Reg. Lat. 127 (1361-7), includes with the treatise a *quaestio* on which of poverty with common possessions (as in monasticism) or poverty with mendicancy is the more perfect. In the manuscript of the later St Albans version however (British Library MS Cotton Claudius E iv), the Monk of Bury's Treatise is associated with a tract in defence of monastic possession against Lollards and other antimonastic laymen: *Inveccio contra Ordinem Monasticum Detrahentes et Loca eorum Destruentes vel Permutantes*.¹⁵ There is other evidence for a change in use and context. If it is correct that Uthred of Boldon was responsible for the Durham version of the treatise, *De Institutis Monachorum*, then it is likely that he undertook the reworking in response to the threat to the possessioners from Wyclif. He drew on the treatise, or something similar, for other polemics. He devoted part of *De Dotacione Ecclesie Sponse Christi* to the history of the primitive church before Constantine, and discussed the history of monasticism in *De Substantialibus*.¹⁶ Other examples of the reshaping of polemical history come from the mendicants. The Austin friars had been engaged in a dispute over priority with the Augustinian Canons, and had, accordingly, an established tradition of polemical history on which to draw in defence of their order, first against FitzRalph, and later against the Wycliffites. At the height of the FitzRalph controversy the Augustinian friar Jordan of Saxony issued his *Vitasfratrum*, a history illustrated with the lives of members of his own order, and of early hermits.¹⁷ The final chapters of Hardeby's *De Vita Evangelica* defended the privileges and priority of the Augustinians.¹⁸ About 1389-90 the Franciscan William Woodford issued a *determinatio* on the long history of the endowed orders, which has been compared with the Monk of Bury's Treatise.¹⁹ This work helps to establish the contents of Wyclif's lost work *De Religione*, which also seems to have dealt with the history and traditions of religious orders, and was probably issued in 1376 or earlier.²⁰

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In *Piers Plowman* the anticlerical exploitation of polemical history is well illustrated by the treatment of Constantine's endowment of the church.²¹ The emphasis on the story is easy to explain. The story was a good illustration of how clerical acquisition of property was a departure from an earlier, pristine state, for those who opposed clerical lordship. Details of the *Piers Plowman* allusions reflect the link with antipossessioner polemic. Anima refers to the well-known legend that at the donation of Constantine the ruin of the church was prophesied by an angel:

Whan Costantyn of curteisie holy kirke dowed
Wip londes and ledes, lordshipes and rentes,
An Aungel men herden an heigh at Rome crye,
'*Dos ecclesie* pis day hap ydronke venym
And po pat han Petres power arn apoisoned alle.' (B xv 557-61)

There is evidence to suggest that the detail and interpretation of this legend were an issue in the conflict over clerical endowment. Gower told the story, with an angel as the prophet, as here, in both the *Mirour de l'Homme* and the *Vox Clamantis*.²² Similarly, a Lollard treatise against the possessioners has an angel in the role of prophet.²³ Uthred, however, attributed the prophecy to the devil, a characteristic feature of his attempt to discredit those who attacked the wealth of the church, for he claimed that the devil still inspired those who proposed disendowment.²⁴ Higden's account in the *Polychronicon* has the devil, the old enemy ('hostis antiquus'), as the prophet, but one manuscript of Trevisa's translation corrects 'pe olde enemy' to 'awngel of hevyn'.²⁵ The image of the donation as poison seems to be related to a quotation traditionally attributed to the angel or devil. It appears in the *Polychronicon* as 'Hodie infusum est venenum in ecclesia Dei', and in Uthred's *De Perfectione Vivendi*, where Uthred objected to the word 'venenum' ('poison'):

Diabolus ... publice in aere clamauerit sicut fertur 'hodie infusum est venenum in ecclesia' ... ipse mendaciter appellat 'venenum' quod est ecclesie optimum alitum ...²⁶

(The devil ... publicly proclaimed, as they say, 'today poison is poured into the church' ... What he falsely calls 'poison' is the best nourishment of the church ...)

Writers in English seem to have approached a standard translation of the text. Trevisa has 'Pis day is venym i-hilde and i-schad in holy chirche', while the Lollard writer has 'pis day is venym sched in-to pe chirche'.²⁷ The tradition still appears in Pecock's *Repressor*: 'In this dai venom is hildid into pe chirche of God'.²⁸ Where these English writers retain the passive voice of the Latin 'infusum est' or 'effusum est', as in Trevisa's 'is ... i-hilde and i-schad', Anima's 'hap ydronke' might suggest a more active involvement on the part of the church, as well as giving more force to the medical metaphor which follows. Oriel 79 and its genetic companion Cambridge University Library Ll 4 14 have noted in their margins the Latin equivalent of the traditional phrase which is the basis of the angel's utterance '*hodie venenum est effusum*

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in ecclesiam domini', showing recognition of the tradition to which the English phrase belongs.²⁹

As well as showing that acquiring civil dominion had been a calamitous historical event, a departure from evangelical poverty rather than always having been the state of the clergy, the opponents of clerical lordship naturally maintained that the original state of the clergy was characterised by an absence of lordship. In defence, the proponents of communal possession sought to show that this had always been the tradition among clerics. Both sides, therefore, turned to historical polemic to support their case. In *Piers Plowman* topics from these traditions are used for broadly anticlerical purposes. Characteristically, such topics, regardless of their former associations with specific orders and traditions, reveal that the clergy have fallen from a former state which is a standard for all clerics, whatever their order or profession. This standard was one of poverty, in accord with charity. Thus traditional details familiar in the writings which issued from the disputes over priority and traditions become evidence for a standard which is based on an authority independent of individual religious rules. Such topics are particularly important in Anima's speech. In the B-text version, Antony, Egidius, Paul of Thebes, Paul of Tarsus, the apostles Peter and Andrew and Mary Magdalene are mentioned specifically, while in the C-text Mary of Egypt and Arsenius are added.³⁰ In a later passage Anima refers to the lives and teaching of Dominic, Francis, Benedict and Bernard, founders of the major orders of monks and friars, and names Antony again.³¹ In addition to these specific references there are more general allusions to the past history of the church, for example in the passage preceding the calls for disendowment. Here poverty and self-denial among the righteous men of the past, before the time of Constantine's donation, are contrasted with present covetousness. In the past there was peace and prosperity; now there is misfortune and war. Formerly the cross of the passion was glorified; now it is the cross marked on the noble and the groat:

It is rupe to rede how riȝtwise men lyuede,
How pei defouled hir flesh, forsoke hir owene wille,
Fer fro kyth and fro kyn yuele ycloped yeden,
Baddely ybedded, no book but conscience,
Ne no richesse but pe roode to reioisse hem Inne:
Absit nobis gloriari nisi in cruce domini nostri &c.
And po was plentee and pees amonges poore and riche,
And now is roupe to rede how pe rede noble
Is reuerenced er pe Rood, receyued for [pe] worprier
Than cristes cros pat ouercam deep and dedly synne. (B xv 533-41)

The history of the period before Constantine's donation was a common subject of debate among polemicists. Those who defended clerical powers and property argued that the clergy had civil dominion even then. Uthred of Boldon, for example, noted that opponents of clerical property claimed that before the time of Constantine's donation the church was without civil

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lordship. He countered this with an argument based on an opposing account of original dominion, in which the righteous were held to have dominion over all things.³² The history of this period was similarly part of the defence of monasticism in the Monk of Bury's Treatise:

Regula cenobitarum tempore apostolorum . . . videlicet in communi et sine proprio uiuebant et nullus eorum suum aliquid esse dicebat, set erant illis omnia communia, nec quisquam egens erat inter illos.³³

(The rule of monks in the time of the apostles . . . plainly, they lived communally without personal property, and none of them called anything his own, but all things were in common among them, nor was anyone poor among them.)

A similar interpretation of the history of the primitive church was used to support mendicancy among the Austin friars, for example, by Jordan of Saxony and Geoffrey Hardeby. On this basis Hardeby found mendicancy more perfect than possession:

Queritur numquid perfectius esset viris ecclesiasticis tantum de decimis et oblacionibus viuere, quam possessionum curam habere vnde viuant. Et quod primum sic perficius quam secundum arguitur sic: primus modus viuendi foret similior et conformior modi viuendi Christi et apostolorum, atque omnium sanctorum patrum ecclesiasticorum vsque ad Vrbanum primum, quam secundus modus viuendi.³⁴

(It is asked whether it is more perfect for ecclesiastics to live by tithes and oblations, than to have the care of possessions on which to live. That the former is more perfect than the latter may be argued thus: the former way of living was more similar to the way Christ and the apostles lived, and all the holy fathers of the church, up to the time of Urban I, than the latter way of living.)

Jordan of Saxony's defence of the Augustinian order included a description of the lives of Egyptian hermits:

*Circuierunt in melotis et in pellibus caprinis, angustiat et afflicti, egentes, quibus dignus non erat mundus, in solitudinibus errantes, in montibus et in speluncis et cavernis terrae . . .*³⁵

(They went about in sheepskins and in goatskins, distressed and wretched, destitute, wandering in solitude, among the hills and among the caves and crevices of the earth. This world was not deserving of them . . .)

Jordan followed tradition in basing his account on the description of the sufferings of the prophets found in Heb. 11:37, as applied by Cassian to the lives of the first hermits Paul and Antony. The details of Anima's history support links with such polemical traditions:

[Lo]! in *legenda sanctorum*, pe lif of holy Seintes,
What penaunce and pouerte and passion pei suffrede,
In hunger, in hete, in alle manere angres.
Antony and Egidie and opere holy fadres
Woneden in wildernesse among wilde beestes,
Monkes and mendinaunt3, men by hemselue
In spekes and spelonkes; selden speken togideres. (B xv 269-75)

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Anima's 'spekes and spelonkes' may be an attempt to render in English 'speluncis et cavernis terrae'; here too are the details of hunger, solitary dwelling and tribulation. The hermits' silence ('selde speken togideres') is also mentioned in Jordan's account, here based on Lam. 3:28, '*Sedebit solitarius et tacebit*', and again applied to early hermits on the authority of Cassian's description.³⁶ For the monks, the Monks of Bury's Treatise also included an account of the life lived by the Egyptian monks after the time of the apostles; in this case the usual account of the hardships they endured was based on the writings of Philo Judaeus.³⁷ In the Durham version of the Treatise, *De Institutis Monachorum*, Antony was mentioned as one of the early monks who continued the apostolic tradition.³⁸

The lives of the apostles Paul, Peter and Andrew are treated similarly in *Piers Plowman*. Although they were formerly associated with disputes both over priority and over competing monastic and fraternal theories of poverty and mendicancy, here the details of their lives are used untraditionally. Anima associates the lives of the early hermits with the lives of the apostles. Paul worked with his hands, making baskets after his preaching, while Peter and Andrew fished for their living:

Poul after his prechyng paniers he made
And wan wip hise hondes pat his wombe neded.
Peter fisshed for his foode and his felawe Andrew . . . (B xv 290-2)

Discussions of the example of the apostles were naturally common both in defences of the monastic orders and in attacks on the newer mendicant orders who claimed to be successors of the apostles. Both the Durham and the Bury St Edmunds Treatises trace monasticism in the life of Christ and the apostles. There, Christ is said to have instituted the monastic life, and Peter is said to have announced acceptance of personal poverty for Christ.³⁹ In Anima's lines on the apostle Paul, apostolic history merges with eremitical legend when basket-making, traditionally Paul the hermit's occupation, is attributed to Paul the apostle. This is a good example of how legendary detail associated with earlier polemics became reworked in accordance with the anticlerical cause. The history of Paul the hermit was important in Augustinian polemics, especially those issued against the Augustinian Canons, rivals of the Hermits, since the Austin friars claimed priority by virtue of their descent from the first hermit, the desert father Paul of Thebes.⁴⁰ Paul the hermit's activity as a basket-maker was interpreted by the author of *De Ortu et Prioritate Ordinis Monachorum* (a polemical tract on the origins of various religious orders in the St Albans version of the Monk of Bury's Treatise) as evidence of manual labour, and used as proof that the Austin friars had departed from the example of the hermit they claimed as their founder.⁴¹ Jordan of Saxony gave Paul the hermit as an example of the hermits who made baskets and ropes for their living. Such activity was closely associated with the life of the apostle Paul, since it is described as being in the tradition of the apostle who, according to the

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traditional authority 2 Thess. 3:8, worked night and day lest he should burden anyone:

Quod autem debemus propriis manibus laborare, habemus exemplum in Apostolo Paulo, qui labore manuum victum suum sibi quaerebat. Unde ipse II^a Thess^o 3 loquens de se et de Barnaba sic ait: *Non gratis panem manducavimus ab aliquo sed in labore et fatigatione die et nocte operantes, ne quem vestrum graveremus* . . . Unde sancti patres in eremo omnes manibus laborabant facientes sportellas et funiculos et cetera huiusmodi . . .⁴²

(We have an example in the apostle Paul, who sought sustenance by manual labour, that we ought to work with our hands. Wherefore he says (2 Thess. 3), speaking about himself and Barnabas: 'We did not eat anyone's bread without paying, but worked day and night in labour and toil, lest we might be a burden to you' . . . Whence the holy fathers in the desert all worked with their hands, making baskets and ropes, and other such things . . .)

The example and teaching of the apostle Paul were often referred to by the polemical writers, in connection with the question of manual labour. Other details of the life of Paul the first hermit, common in polemics on the priority and validity of the Austin friars, are reworked here. Anima asserts that Paul the first hermit hid himself with moss and leaves, and was fed by birds:

Poul *primus heremita* hadde parroked hymselue
That no man myzte hym se for mosse and for leues.
Foweles hym fedde, fele wyntres wip alle,
Til he foundede freres of Austynes ordre, [or ellis freres lyen].

(B xv 286–9)

This is similar to the claim of William of St Amour in his *Collectiones* that, according to Jerome, Paul made clothes from palm leaves and ate fruit or whatever God sent by bird or an angel.⁴³ In *De Ortu et Prioritate Ordinis Monachorum* it is said that a raven gave food to the hermit Paul, following God's bidding. The writer sarcastically asks why the Austin friars fail to follow the example of the hermit they claim as their founder, but instead beg in cities.⁴⁴ In *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede* the dispute between the Austin friars and the Dominicans over origins is satirised; here again Paul is claimed as the Augustinians' founder and model:

We friers be pe first and founded vpon treupe.
Paul *primus* [*heremita*] put vs him-selue
Awey into wildernes pe werlde to dispisen;
And pere we leng[e]den full longe & lyueden full harde . . .⁴⁵

This merging of legend and biblical authority in *Piers Plowman* suggests a lack of emphasis on these details as authorities either for the monastic theory of manual labour or for the Augustinian tradition; a similar change of emphasis is also apparent in the well-known example in Chaucer's *Pardoner's Prologue*.⁴⁶

The topic of being fed by birds is used in a way characteristic of the reworking of polemical history in *Piers Plowman*:

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For we ben goddes foules and abiden alwey,
Tyl briddes brynge vs that we shulde lyue by.
For had 3e potage and payn ynough and peny-ale to drynke,
And a messe there-mydde of o manere kynde,
3e had ri3t ynough, 3e religious and so 3owre reule me tolde:
Nunquam, dicit Iob, rugiet onager cum herbam habuerit?
aut mugiet bos cum ante plenum presepe steterit?
Brutorum animalium natura te condempnat, quia cum eis
pabulum commune sufficiat; ex adipe prodijt iniquitas tua.

(Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, B xv 308–12a)⁴⁷

The legend of hermits being fed by birds is here a figure for the state of poverty proper to the clergy. The implications of the life of Paul the hermit for the Augustinian dispute received only a passing reference in some manuscripts, and in others no mention at all. Explicit reference to the conflict over the foundation of the Austin friars is found in only two manuscripts in the B-text tradition, and in one of these cases the phrase ‘or ellis freres lyen’ (B xv 289) has been included by a hand other than that of the main scribe. Additional distance from the controversy occurs in the idiosyncratic F manuscript, with has ‘fraunces’ for ‘Austynes’ in the phrase ‘freres of Austynes ordre’ (B xv 289), perhaps to repair the alliteration. As a contrast, the characteristically well-informed B-text manuscripts O and C² have ‘Anoper poule’ (B xv 290 var.) in the following line, indicating familiarity with the traditions by carefully distinguishing the apostle from the hermit. In the C-text however there is a clear reference to the Augustinian controversy:

Foules hym fedde, yf frere Austynes be trewe,
For he ordeyned pat ordre or elles pey gabben. (C xvii 15–16)

C-text manuscript Cambridge University Library Ff 5 35, which has a very small amount of medieval marginalia, has a *nota* against the first of these lines.⁴⁸ Rather than being a part of the old conflict over priority between two specific religious orders, in *Piers Plowman* the detail from the legend becomes a figure applicable to all religious. The wide relevance is emphasised even more in the C-text revision:

Iob pe parfite patriarke this prouerbe wroet and tauhte
To make men louye mesure pat monkes ben and freres. (C xvii 51–2)

The detail merges with the Matt. 6:26 tradition, emphasising the freedom from anxiety proper to all clergy. Skeat’s reading ‘foules’ (*Parallel Texts*, B xv 308) appropriately links the traditional antimendicant image of feeding by birds with the birds of the air of Matt. 6:26, traditionally a figure for the carefree life.

The treatment of the lives of the first monk, Antony, and of the founders of the major religious orders, is characterised by a similar shift of emphasis in respect of details which were formerly issues of the clerics’ controversies. Anima claims that the founders Dominic, Francis, Benedict and Bernard, and

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also Antony, the first monk, lived frugally in humble homes from the alms of loyal men. They were the first teachers of this way of life which, when perfectly lived, makes anchorites, hermits, monks and friars the equals of the apostles:

[Ac] for drede of pe deep I dar noȝt telle trupe,
How englishe clerkes a coluere fede pat coueitise hiȝte,
And ben manered after Makometh pat no man vseþ troupe.
Ancres and heremytes and Monkes and freres
Peeren to Apostles poruȝ hire parfit lyuyng.
Wolde neuere pe feipful fader pat [p]ise Ministres sholde
Of tirauntȝ pat tenep trewe men taken any almesse,
But doon as Antony dide, dominyk and Fraunceys,
[Bope] Beneit and Bernard, pe whiche hem first tauȝte
To lyue by litel and in lowe houses by lele mennes almesse.

(B xv 414–23)

The details traditionally associated with the lives of the founders of the religious orders were naturally a source of conflict in the poverty disputes. The lives of Benedict and Francis especially were sources of controversy. Enemies of the Franciscans used the example and teaching of their founder as an example of manual labour, while another source of conflict was the question of whether Benedict had begged. William of St Amour used as an argument against begging the legend about Benedict which tells how he lived in a cave and was fed by the loyal monk Romanus.⁴⁹ This was a reply to those 'Otij Defensores' who used the story in defence of mendicancy, of which there were many examples. William's opponent Bonaventure related the story in his *quaestio* on manual labour, using Benedict as an example of one who did not live from his own labour because he was occupied with spiritual work.⁵⁰ Similarly, Thomas Aquinas related the legend in his chapter on the obligation of manual labour.⁵¹ Pecham used Benedict, Francis and Dominic as examples of how evangelical poverty was consistent with mendicancy.⁵² The example and precepts of St Francis were a major issue in the conflict between FitzRalph and the friars. FitzRalph used Francis's *Testament* to show that Francis put work before begging.⁵³ Although these topics from polemical history appear in *Piers Plowman*, they are not associated with support for any specific religious tradition. Here, distinctions between the different foundations and orders are eroded, as the lives of all these first monks and friars are examples of the pristine state lost by all 'englishe clerkes' (B xv 415), but available to anchorites, hermits, monks and friars alike who follow their example. Thus the meaning of the lives of the apostles and early hermits applies to endowed orders and mendicants alike. A general inference is also drawn from the first state of the religious orders, all of whose leaders lived in poverty in accord with charity, as an example to all clerics 'To lyue by litel and in lowe houses by lele mennes almesse' (B xv 423). This interpretation of the first state of the clergy is founded on an understanding of pristine poverty as a state to be discussed in terms of charity.

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CHARITY AND POSSESSION

'What is charite?' quod I po; 'a childissh pyng', he seide:
'*Nisi efficiamini sicut paruuli non intrabitis in regnum celorum.*
Wipouten fauntelte or folie a fre liberal wille.'
'Where sholde men fynde swich a frend wip so fre an herte?

... fond I neuere ful charite, bifore ne bihynde.
Men bep merciabe to mendinaunt3 and to poore,
And wollen lene per pei leue lelly to ben paid.
Ac charite pat Poul preiseþ best, and moost plesaunt to oure [Saueour] –
Non inflatur, non est ambiciosa, non querit que sua sunt ...

'Charite', quod he, 'ne chaffareþ noȝt, ne chalangeþ, ne craueþ.
As proud of a peny as of a pound of golde,
And is as glad of a gowne of a gray russet
As of a tunycle of tarse or of trie scarlet ...'

'Hap he anye rentes or richesse or any riche frendes?'
'Of rentes n[e] of richesse rekkep he neuere,
For a frend pat fyndep hym failed hym neuere at nede:
Fiat voluntas tua fynt hym eueremoore,
And if he soupeþ etep but a sop of *Spera in deo* ...

[Amonges erchebisshopes and bisshopes, [for beggeres sake],
For to wonye wip hem his wone was som tyme,
And cristes patrymonye to þe poore parcelmele dele;
Ac auarice hap þe keyes now and kepeþ for his kynnesmen
And for his seketoures & his seruauȝt3, & som for hir children] ...'

(B xv 149–51; 153–7; 165–8; 176–80; 244–8)

Giving to beggars with no expectation of a return; not trading; not asserting one's rights; taking no pride in money, nor in clothing; being heedless of property; trusting in God to provide: thus Anima defines – not *poverty*, as we might expect – but *charity*. Charity, not poverty, is a stranger to archbishops and bishops. When they hoard wealth, the clergy fail in charity – by denying the poor – not in poverty. Clerical possession is a question of charity, not poverty.

The extracts are characteristic of the new anticlerical treatment of charity. For charity was essential to the new anticlerical perspective. Clerical dominion was not simply a matter of poverty. For the anticlericals it was not enough to demand that clerics should have no civil dominion, that they should be poor. Such demands gave no authority for anticlerical action, nor did they identify the agents of correction. But charity released the political implications of the new poverty polemic. From this new point of view, clerical poverty, and its opposite, clerical wealth, were functions of charity. Acts of charity supported poor clerics, and created rich clerics. Clerical possession was lay donation. Superfluous clerical wealth was alms due to the lay poor. Clerical mendicancy depended on the layman's alms. It is no accident that anticlericals emphasised the *donation* of the emperor Constantine as the source of clerical wealth. When clerical poverty was considered as a function

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of charity, then the political implications were clear. An authority and responsibility for correction fell to the lay donors and almsgivers. The king, the lay lords and the laity must restore the clergy to their original state.

FitzRalph, it seems, did not clearly explain where civil dominion over clerical possessions rested. The nature of his difficulty, and perhaps embarrassment, is clear from the development of the potential of his theory of poverty as a weapon against clerical property. When Johannes, FitzRalph's fictional disputant in *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, attacked the wealth of prelates with the claim that they resembled lay lords, 'Ricardus' replied that they were not rich because they held wealth for the poor.⁵⁴ But although he reconciled poverty with clerical possession in this way, he could not explain where civil dominion over those possessions was located.⁵⁵ For those not committed (unlike FitzRalph) to defending clerical property, the new poverty polemic contained within it the potential for a full exploitation of FitzRalph's antifraternal arguments for an attack on clerical dominion. His use of the poverty polemic against the friars' 'property' in pastoral care had shown how this might be done. The anticlerical development of the antifraternal 'restitution' theme is one example of such exploitation. According to the newly appropriated Franciscan theory of poverty, mendicancy gave the friars natural, but not civil, dominion over alms received. No civil dominion, the friars had claimed, rested with the order; in classic Franciscan thought it was located with the papacy, while English friars, it seems, claimed that civil dominion remained with the donors; they held their possessions at the will of lay lords, as villeins held their land. It was this explanation of how the friars had possessions which provided the language for the new account of clerical dominion. It accounts for the importance in anticlerical satire and polemic of the notion and language of charity.

As we have seen, the earlier polemicists had discussed acts of charity. But the new anticlericalism made them a focus. Almsgiving was a particularly useful subject. The notion that all clerical possessions should be considered alms had already been developed to some extent by the friars. As noted above, when the seculars demanded restitution of their tithes and oblations, turning poverty polemic against the friars, the friars questioned whether tithes were not really to be thought of as alms, over which the seculars had no rights. Such an argument seems to lie behind the 'Frater Johannes' case from the FitzRalph period. Using the language of almsgiving to discuss possession subsequently became possible for the anticlericals because in the new anticlerical poverty polemic, as was argued in chapter 3, antimendicant arguments were applied by the anticlericals to the endowed clergy and the begging friars alike, as defrauders of the true poor. Hence Anima's treatment of the poverty of the leaders of the major orders, and of the apostles and early hermits: Antony, Dominic, Francis, Benedict and Bernard lived 'by lele mennes almesse' (B xv 423). Their poverty was exemplary because it depended upon a just charity. The lives of the apostles and early hermits mean figuratively that law-abiding men should provide for clerics, and that clerics should provide for good men:

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Ac god sente hem foode by foweles and by no fiersse beestes
In menyng pat meke pyng mylde pyng sholde fede.
[Riȝt so] Religiouses rightfulle men sholde [fynde],
And lawefulle men to lifholy men liflode brynge ... (B xv 305–8)

The new point of view released new meanings for the old topic of ill-gotten gains. The secular clergy had used the topic against the friars. Restitution must be made of anything obtained illicitly; we have seen how this was a weapon against the diversion of tithes for alms, against the receipt of alms from penitents such as usurers, and against the friars' retention of pastoral care. But if all clerical possession was seen to depend on charity, then the topic might be extended to possessioners as well as mendicants. Accordingly, in Anima's speech, the specific antifraternial application of the topic is linked with its application to religious generally:

... lawefulle men to lifholy men liflode brynge;
And panne wolde lordes and ladies be loop to agulte,
And to taken of hir tenauntz moore pan troupe wolde,
Founde pei pat freres wolde forsake hir almesses
And bidden hem bere it pere it [yborwed was]. (B xv 308–12)

The topic, then, is applied to all clerics who illicitly retain possessions, endowed orders and mendicants alike. Just so, earlier in Anima's speech the theme is extended to imperfect priests:

Allas, ye lewed men, much lese ye on preestes!
Ac ping pat wikkedly is wonne, and wip false sleighes,
Wolde neuere pe wit of witty god but wikkede men it hadde,
The whiche arn preestes inparfite and prechours after siluer ... (B xv 128–31)

This theme is much developed in the C-text revision of Anima's speech.⁵⁶ Likewise, elsewhere this topic is turned against priests who seek payments from the profits of crime:

If preestes weren [wise] pei wolde no siluer take
For masses ne for matyns, noȝt hir mete of vsureres ... (B xi 283–4)

Misuse of alms was another topic adapted to bring out the political implications of poverty. As we have seen in chapter 3, the new analysis of religious mendicancy brought into relation the voluntary and involuntary poor. The notion that the mendicants' illegitimate claims on alms diverted funds from the true poor was easily related to the possessioners' sinful retention of wealth rightfully due to the poor. Accordingly, the pristine state of the religious is interpreted in Anima's speech as an example of true charity, and contrasted with that of those who misplace or sinfully acquire wealth, on the authority of Jerome's dictum '*Quia sacrilegium est res pauperum non pauperibus dare*' (B xv 343a). Just so, in a passage unique to the alpha tradition of the B-text, prelates who fail to distribute 'cristes patrymonye' (B xv 246) to the poor are accused of having fallen from their earlier state of

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charity. The implications of this argument for clerical property were exploited by Bankyn in the 1371 parliament, on the authority of the Jerome text.⁵⁷ Examples of its antimendicant use are frequent, because the text occurred in canon law on the question of alms for the clergy.⁵⁸ In Nicholas Hereford's Ascension Day 1382 sermon the potential of FitzRalph's anti-fraternal language as a weapon against clerical dominion is clearly developed. Just as FitzRalph had shown the friars to be thieves and defrauders of the goods of others, so here the endowed clergy are presented. Hereford argued that since they retained goods, contrary to the wishes of founders, possessioners were thieves of the goods of others, and wrongly retained the goods of the poor.⁵⁹

Another argument of this kind had been used earlier against the possessioners. The friars had claimed that if clerical possessions were 'alms', then those alms were due to poor friars, not tithe-rich secular clergy or wealthy monks. Such an argument is recorded in the letter to FitzRalph from the Chancellor and Masters of Oxford University concerning someone who had determined against possessioners in the schools. Apparently, this polemicist had said that tithes were owed to the mendicant friars rather than to curates ('decime ecclesie magis debentur fratribus mendicantibus quam curatis').⁶⁰ A similar story attaches to 'Frater Johannes', who, at a similar date, was accused of having said that tithes were more rightly owed to friars than to the secular clergy. The record of the friar's punishment is an account of three points, the first being that he has asserted in the schools:

quod decimae ecclesiarum magis debentur mendicantibus quam rectoribus earumdem
(that church tithes are owed to mendicants rather than to the rectors of the churches)

In the final point of his recantation he is to retract the assertion:

*quod decimae Ecclesiae magis sunt debitae fratribus mendicantibus quam rectoribus et curatis*⁶¹

(that church tithes are more due to mendicant friars than to rectors and curates)

Endowing the friars as well as, or perhaps instead of, the monks was mentioned in the satirical commentary on John of Bridlington's *Prophecy*, which has been attributed to the Austin friar John Erghome. Here the verse line 'Ecclesie patres solvent hoc tempore fratres' is exploited for several satirical meanings, all related to the controversy concerning the friars. Grammatically, the text is ambiguous. Either 'fratres' ('friars') or 'Ecclesie patres' ('church fathers') could be the subject, and either could be the object, of the verb 'solvent'. The satire rests on the fact that context does not decide the matter, for 'solvent' has several possible relevant meanings. One possible interpretation of the prophecy is that the church will undo the friars. Another is that the church will endow the friars. If this is the case, the commentary runs, the friars will receive prebends and ecclesiastical dignities from the church, and lands from lords, as the monks do now, and will no longer be

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bound to poverty and begging.⁶² Each of these examples illustrates how the friars used the topic of their 'endowment' with the possessioners' wealth for satirical purposes. They used it to imply that the secular clergy were less worthy of tithes for their pastoral work than the friars; to suggest that the monks too were in need of correction, and should at least share their temporalities. The commentary on the prophecy perhaps derives some of its satirical point from an implication that all this could never happen, such is the attachment of the possessioners to their wealth.

In *Piers Plowman* a 'finding' for the friars is mentioned several times. Clergie prophesies that the friars will have access to Constantine's endowment, after correction of the monks: '... Freres in hir fraytour shul fynden a keye Of Costantyns cofres ...' (B x 328-9), and the C-text adds an extra line which prophesies that friars will find 'Bred withouten beggyng to lyue by eueure aftur' (C v 174). Piers asserts that 'it is an vnresonable Religion pat hap riȝt noȝt of certein' (B vi 151). Nede says that the friars should be left to live on angels' food:

'... For lomere he lyep pat liflode moot begge
Than he pat labourep for liflode and lenep it beggeris.
And sipen freres forsoke pe felicitye of erpe
Lat hem be as beggeris or lyue by Aungeles foode.'
Conscience of pis conseil po comsede for to laughe ... (B xx 238-42)

Conscience laughs, and offers instead to guarantee the friars' necessities. Conscience laughs at Nede's allusion to what was an old antimendicant joke. Religious were associated with angels because the gloss on Luke 12:24 compares the birds of the air, traditionally interpreted as a reference to contemplatives, with angels. Bonaventure quoted the text with this gloss as an authority for the renunciation of temporal goods, and against the obligation of work for monks:

Item, Lucae duodecimo: *Respicite volatilia caeli*; Glossa: "Sancti merito avibus comparantur, qui, nihil in hoc mundo habentes nec laborantes, sola contemplatione aeterna quaerunt, iam similes Angelis."⁶³

(Item, Luke 12: 'Regard the birds of the skies'; Gloss: 'Saints are rightly compared with birds, who, neither working nor having anything in this world, seek the eternal by contemplation alone, already similar to angels.')

The comparison of contemplatives with angels provided the material for satirical jokes. Jordan of Saxony related an ancient story of two monks, one of whom desired not to work, but to be carefree as the angels are ('Vellem securus esse, sicut et angeli securi sunt, nihil operantes ...'). When he returned from his idle solitude to his companion he found the door shut against him. The companion asked who was there, and he replied 'It is I, John.' The companion replied that John was now an angel, and left his hungry brother outside until morning.⁶⁴ William of St Amour attributed the story to Jerome, using it at the expense of the mendicant friars in his *Collectiones*. He added another, similar story, again taken from Jerome,

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about a monk who advised his brothers to cease labouring, since it was Mary who had chosen the 'better part'. An older monk sent him away, and when he returned, asking why no-one had called him to eat, the older monk replied:

*Tu homo spiritualis es, & non indiges hoc cibo nostro. Nos autem carnales sumus, & volentes manducare, propterea operamur manibus nostris: Tu vero bonam partem elegisti, legens tota die, & nolens sumere carnalem cibum.*⁶⁵

(You are a man of the spirit, and do not need our food. But we are carnal, wishing to eat, therefore we work with our hands. You have chosen the better part, devouring books all day, not wishing to partake of our carnal food.)

Conscience laughs at the joke about angels' food, but still seeks a 'fyndyng' (B xx 383) for the friars at the end of the poem. Thus in *Piers Plowman* the topic is adapted for new purposes. For though originally pro-fraternal, like many of the friars' other arguments this integrated neatly with the new account of clerical dominion. Although clerical possessions might be considered to have the *status* of alms, this was unified with the antimendicant position, so that it was not an endorsement of *begging*. For example, in his 1382 sermon Nicholas Hereford linked disendowment of the endowed orders with prevention of the friars' mendicancy, as ways of restoring both kinds of religious to their pristine state:

... monachi et possessionati nunquam erunt humiles donec auferantur possessiones eorum; nec fratres mendicantes vmquam erunt boni donec impediantur mendicationes eorum.⁶⁶

(... monks and possessioners will never be humble until their possessions are taken away, nor will mendicant friars ever be good until their begging is prevented.)

The new anticlerical emphasis on almsgiving and other acts of charity brought out the political implications of poverty. In *Piers Plowman*, characteristically, acts of charity are treated in a way which reveals their implications for clerical dominion. In Clergie's speech the notion that secular lords will disendow the endowed orders is linked with an admonition of those lords who endow religious:

Litel hadde lordes to doon to 3yue lond from hire heires
To Religiose pat han no roupe pou3 it reyne on hir Auters.
In many places per pei [persons ben, be pei purely] at ese,
Of pe pouere haue pei no pite, and pat is hir [pure chartre] ...

(B x 317-20)

In Anima's speech the laity are again attacked for endowing religious:

If lewed men knewe pis latyn pei wolde loke whom pei yeue,
And ausen hem bfore a fyue dayes or sixe
Er pei amortisede to monkes or [monyales] hir rente[s].
Allas, lordes and ladies, lewed counseil haue ye
To 3yue from youre heires pat youre Aiels yow lefte,
And [bisette] to bidde for yow to swiche pat ben riche,
And ben founded and feffed ek to bidde for opere.
Who parfournep pis prophecie of pe peple pat now libbep,

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Dispersit, dedit pauperibus?

If any peple parfournne pat text it are pise poore freres,

For pat pei beggen aboute in buyldynge pei spende ... (B xv 319–29)

In both cases the clergy's possession of lands and buildings is seen to depend on donation by lay lords; possession is grounded in an act of charity. Here, these acts of charity are attacked on the basis that they deprive rightful heirs. This theme was characteristic in polemics on possession. The Austin friar Geoffrey Hardeby used the argument against endowment, on the authority of a sermon by Augustine. According to this authority, the claims upon property of the natural heir had priority over those of any clerical heir.⁶⁷ The same authority and argument appear in the Lollard manual *Rosarium Theologie* under 'Possession'.⁶⁸ The dangerous antipossessioner implications are clear from the way Uthred of Boldon examined the nature of gifts to the church in *Contra Garrulos Dotacionem Ecclesie Impugnantes*. Such an argument suggested that in such cases lordship could not be alienated to the clergy. If this was the case, then it followed that secular lords retained lordship over their donations and therefore could withdraw them. Uthred accordingly argued that donors to the church retained no rights over their donations and disputed the claim that a father could not alienate lands from his son.⁶⁹ The two Austin friars involved in the conflict over the taxation of the clergy in 1371 argued that because by canon law churchmen held all except 'primices et lours dismes' by donation of secular rulers, they could not deny a request for help in the case of necessity. Refusal of a grant was an abuse, and in this case correction by the removal of possessions and liberties would be blessed by God.⁷⁰

The links between the Franciscan theory of poverty and this argument are clear in a letter of 1280 written by the Franciscan friar Hugh de Brisingham.⁷¹ This letter, written to the Chancellor, deals with the application of the recently issued Statute of Mortmain to the Franciscan friars. The statute, issued in 1279, prohibited all future acquisition or grant of lands in mortmain to religious houses; henceforward, either a licence was necessary or fines were payable for such acquisitions.⁷² Hugh sought exception from the statute for the Franciscans, on the grounds that, under *Exiit qui seminat*, Franciscans had only the use, not the ownership, of donations. In view of the subsequent anticlerical exploitation of this position in England, it is noteworthy that Hugh did not assert that dominion of the friars' goods rested with the papacy (which presumably would not have helped his position) but claimed it remained with the donors, and thus the goods could be withdrawn at any time. Such, it seems, was the position characteristically adopted by the English friars who, when defending their lands, claimed to hold them at the will of the lay lord, like villeins.⁷³ About the time the statute was introduced, the Franciscan John Pecham had argued that dominion was not transferred with a legacy to the friars.⁷⁴ In *Piers Plowman* such donations are treated, characteristically, as a kind of misplaced alms, for the clerical recipients sinfully retain them (monks and friars alike in Anima's speech) instead of giving them to the poor. In the alpha B-text manuscripts R and F an extra line

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in Clergie's speech 'Sterueth and stynketh and steleth lordes almesses' increases the emphasis on such transactions as a travesty of charity.⁷⁵ Likewise, Nicholas Hereford argued that religious retained temporal goods for themselves against the wishes and intentions of founders.⁷⁶

Bequests are treated as a travesty of true charity in two other ways in *Piers Plowman*. Rechelesnesse and Ymaginatif warn that the rich who do not give alms, but reserve all their charity for their bequests, will probably be damned to hell, 'he for his hard holdyng in helle, parauntur' (C XII 243). Ymaginatif links this danger with the hazard of false executors, using the image of the peacock. The rich man is like a peacock, trailing a heavy tail of riches, with an unpleasant voice to which Christ in judgement will not listen, and subject to false executors, foul like the peacock's feet.⁷⁷ The implications of the false executor topic are clear in Anima's speech, where it is asserted that bequests in the hands of avaricious clergy are not used for alms for the poor, but are retained by such false executors.⁷⁸ Originally, these topics were part of antifraternal poemic, but their potential for becoming part of the broader anticlerical case is clear. At first, the status of bequests, and the trustworthiness of executors, were questioned in the context of the defence of the secular clergy. This was a part of the issue of rights to sepulture. As we have seen in chapter 2, the friars' burial privileges were attacked by the secular clergy as rights incompatible with the friars' profession of poverty, and a theft of what was due to the seculars. Central to this position was the claim that bequests were not alms. It was a characteristic theme of FitzRalph's sermons that such acts were not meritorious acts of charity, and therefore endangered the souls of donors.⁷⁹ In a sermon preached to the people of Drogheda he repeated his usual claim, that a cup of cold water given in life was worth more than all the gold in the world left as a bequest:

... amplius prodest homini sua libera voluntate gratuita dare putam aut calicem aque frigide, ipso viuento, quam quod totum aurum mundi per executores suos pro eo distribuatur post mortem.⁸⁰

(... it benefits a man more to give a drink or cup of cold water, while he is alive, of his own free will, than that all the gold in the world should be distributed by his executors on his behalf after his death.)

In a sermon preached at Deddington he asserted that such bequests brought avaricious executors into mortal sin.⁸¹ The theme also occurs in sermons preached in English to the people of Lichfield, to the people of Burton on Trent (perhaps including some Oxford students) and before the king on the occasion of a public procession in London.⁸² It is a theme in the formal Latin sermons preached in the chapel of Benedict XII and in the Carmelite friars' church in Avignon.⁸³

The appearance of the theme in antifraternal sermons preached in Avignon during the course of proceedings there against the friars makes clear its polemical application. While the rich retain their superfluous goods – by implication for bequests to the friars – the poor die and the rich lose the fruit

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of their almsgiving.⁸⁴ It is clear that bequests could not be considered to have the status of alms for the friars because they were not immediately necessary to them (since the friars could wait for the death of the donor). This is why, defending the friars, Conway argued that they received funeral dues as alms ('funeralia nomine purae eleemosynae').⁸⁵ This was a version of the old argument that dominion was not transferred with a legacy. This antifraternernal topic was the germ of the argument against clerical dominion over donations, although some changes of emphasis were necessary. FitzRalph advocated for rich laymen immediate renunciation of all but necessities, rather than charitable bequests, and denied that this encroached on the rights of sons and daughters; but clearly, to make this a broadly anticlerical argument it was necessary to exploit the old Franciscan argument to show that almsgiving did not alienate civil dominion from heirs at all.⁸⁶ The idea of the clergy as false executors became more important as the notion that clerical possessioners were trustees of alms for the poor was married with the anti-mendicant arguments. Thus in the Lollard *Rosarium Theologie* the anti-fraternernal argument about the 'cup of cold water' appears under the entry 'Exequiarum':

And of execucion of distribucion of godez of fortune after depe speykeþ *Dominus Armachanus* in *sermone qui sic incipit*, '*Gaudete in Domino*', 'In sewyng destribucions of godez of pis world for a man after his deiþe per may noping be geten hym in heuen for he hap noping in heuen bot after þe quantite of his labour & after his werkez here in þe way, as ofte tyme replieþ holi writte, olde & newe. But þe moste profite pat any dede man may fynde for pat after his deiþe is lessenyng of þe payne of purgatorie, or ful taken away þerof. It is certen forsop pat takyng away of temperal peyne is after temperale profete or gode, noȝt aylastyng gode. Werfor it scheweip oponly pat noping pat may be done after pis life may gete to man so mych profete as be gifyng of colde water of charite in pis life. By pat þerfore it is certayne pat many folez ar deceyued pat [kep] so per godez to par executours for to be giffen for þam, wen þei myȝt wipout dispendiousnez of par state dele þam be þer self in þer liffe. I speike noȝt of godez couenable to gode men conuersande riȝtwisly werof þei haue merite, but of abundande godez werof þe nedinez of pouer men myȝt be releued.'⁸⁷

Emphasising the part played by the secular lords in clerical possession brought a new focus and significance to another old satirical topic. It had long been traditional to satirise wealthy clerics by portraying them as self-indulgent lords who oppressed and neglected the poor. In *Piers Plowman* the treatment of this tradition is in accordance with the new understanding of clerical possessioners. Here, the significance of such topics is not merely that clerics are excessively wealthy, but that they should have no civil title to *property* in their possessions at all. Thus those aspects of clerical wealth are emphasised which expose the clergy's sinful assertion of civil dominion. At the feast with the Great Doctor, for example, the old antimonastic topic of meat-eating exposes the friar's neglect of the poor, his abuse of almsgiving (receiving ill-gotten gains) and his sinful receipt and abuse of bequests ('*Post mortem*')

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Ac pis maister [of pise men] no maner flessch [eet],
Ac [he eet] mete of moore cost, mortrews and potages.
Of pat men myswonne pei made hem wel at ese,
Ac hir sauce was ouer sour and vnsauourly grounde
In a morter, *Post mortem*, of many bitter peyne
But if pei synge for po soules and wepe salte teris:
Vos qui peccata hominum comeditis, nisi pro eis lacrimas & oraciones
eff[u]deritis, ea que in delicijs comeditis in tormentis euometis.

(B XIII 40-5a)⁸⁸

The jibe in this passus about the friars' infirmary is probably also a satirical allusion to their uncharitable assertion of civil dominion: 'And if ye fare so in youre Fermerye, ferly me pynkep But cheeste be per charite sholde be, and yonge children dorste pleyne' (B XIII 109-10). William Woodford used precepts in the Franciscan Rule concerning the care of sick brethren as evidence that friars were required to be anxious for the future, and therefore might rightfully have civil dominion.⁸⁹ In *Piers Plowman*, by contrast, such anxiety is treated as charity, incompatible with the Great Doctor's gluttony, and also with training children to beg for the order. A similar shift of focus is to be detected in Clergie's attack on monastic indulgence. Hunting, a common antimonastic topic, symbolised, as an activity 'out of the cloister', apostasy from the rule (either in general, or with specific suggestions of lechery or gluttony). In *Piers Plowman*, however, it exposes false claims to civil dominion, for the monk likes to hunt 'as he a lord were' (B x 314).⁹⁰ Again, being served at table is treated as a sign of lordliness, not merely a sign of gluttony, 'but if his knaue knele pat shal his coppe brynge' (B x 315).

Topics such as these show clerics illicitly usurping the lordship of secular lords. Perhaps one of the most useful and characteristic topics for this purpose was that of ownership of land and buildings. Clerical property-owning of this kind in *Piers Plowman* is a recurrent theme, characteristically associated with the abuse of charity. Bequests of land and buildings to monks not only deprive natural heirs and the poor, but also clearly make clerics false imitators of the temporal lords with whom civil dominion should rest:

Litel hadde lordes to doon to 3yue lond from hire heires
To Religiouse pat han no roupe pou3 it reyne on hir Auters.
In many places per pei [persons ben, be pei purely] at ese,
Of pe pouere haue pei no pite, and pat is hir [pure chartre];
Ac pei leten hem as lordes, hire lon[d lip] so brode. (B x 317-21)

Again, Anima links donations with the imitation by clerics of landed temporal lords: 'For pat pei beggen aboute in buyldynge pei spende' (B xv 329); asserts that the founders of the orders lived 'in lowe houses' (B xv 423); and complains that friars and others spend 'In housynge . . . Moore for pompe pan for pure charite' (B xv 78-9). As we have noted in chapter 2, Repentaunce links ownership of fine buildings with the friars' theft of pastoral care; both are sinful assertions of civil dominion. Like so many other topics, this was used antifraternally first, before being adapted for the new anticlerical satire.

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FitzRalph had used the topic against the friars, for example, in *Nemo Vos Seducat*:

...habent edificia tanquam regum palacia, pistrinas ampliores comitibus, ecclesias sumptuosiores cathedralibus, ornamenta plura et nobiliora cunctis mundi prelatibus (domino nostro papa fortassis excepto).⁹¹

(... they have buildings like the palaces of kings, bigger kitchens than counts, churches more luxuriously appointed than cathedrals, jewels more numerous and more exalted than all the prelates of the world – with the possible exception of our lord the pope.)

Nicholas Hereford extended the topic to the possessioners, and scored a satirical point by emphasising the link with the mendicants:

... isti religiosi, non solum possessionati, set etiam mendicantes, ultra necessitatem victum et vestitum superhabundant immensis thesauris absconditis, quibus edificant et construunt altas domos et sollempnes ecclesias, quod est contra statum et professionem eorum expresse.⁹²

(... these religious – not only the possessioners, but also the mendicants – abound in food and clothing beyond what they require, with vast treasure hoards, with which they construct and build lofty houses and splendid churches, which is expressly against their status and profession.)

The reference in Clergie's speech to careless religious 'pat han no roupe pou3 it reyne on hir Auters' (B x 318) is seemingly inconsistent with the jibes about *fine* buildings – here palaces and manors. But the detail is consistent with the wider meanings of the satire. Neglect of buildings is a parallel image with that of the false executor, suggesting how the recipients of donations have failed as trustees for them, and how the lay donors have themselves been foolish and irresponsible. The friars tried to accuse the possessioners of this neglect. When their opponents pointed out the irony that friars had finer buildings than the endowed orders or temporal lords, the friars replied that the possessioners allowed *their* property to fall into disrepair.⁹³ But as the friars' poverty theory became merged with antimendicant arguments, this topic too was used by the anticlericals. Thus the reference to rain on the altar occurs in a Wycliffite treatise which laments the diversion of funds to the friars as a misplacing of alms:

Thouh it raine on the Awter of the Parish Church, the blind people is so deceived, that they will rather give to waste houses of Friars, then to Parish Churches, or to the common waies, though men cattle and beasts ben perished therein.⁹⁴

The usefulness of land and buildings as an image of the clergy's sinful dominion is attributable not simply to the fact that these were manifestations of excessive wealth, but to the fact that such possessions were undeniably property in civil law. The nature of the dominion which might be held over consumable goods was contestable (John XXII, attacking the Franciscan distinction between possession and use, claimed sarcastically that it had never been the intention of *Exiit qui seminat* that the papacy should hold civil

dominion over every egg and loaf of bread).⁹⁵ Possession of land and buildings more clearly implied the exercise of rights in civil law; thus here the clergy more clearly took the place of temporal lords. Accordingly, in *Piers Plowman* possession of land and buildings is treated as a participation by the clergy in civil law in a way incompatible with charity. The monk is a 'ledere of louedayes' and a 'lond buggere' (B x 312). This was an anticlerical version of the antifraternal case against the friars' involvement in litigation, in the acquisition and defence of property rights. In *De Pauperie Salvatoris* FitzRalph examined the question of litigation among the clergy as a form of civil dominion, and in *Unusquisque* he argued that the privilege of sepulture was against the friars' perfection because it brought them into litigation.⁹⁶ Woodford argued that litigation was lawful for the clergy.⁹⁷ The implications of involvement in 'lovedays' – days for arbitration of disputes in court – and its broadly anticlerical potential, are clearer in extra lines in the Prologue in some A-text manuscripts. In one example friars are associated with this activity: 'lederes pei be of louedayes and with pe lawe medle', and indeed, this was a common antifraternal charge; for example, Chaucer's Friar Huberd also participates in lovedays.⁹⁸ Like the charge that friars involved themselves in worldly business – again, associated with Huberd, and with Faus Semblant – and more clearly, the topic could show an illicit participation in civil law.⁹⁹ With the lovedays topic the association of 'love' and 'law' neatly points the opposition between charity and clerical participation in human law. Its uses were not simply antifraternal. In a variant reading of the extra A Pro lines vicars, rather than friars, are leaders of lovedays.

Several other topics carry the loading of participation in civil law. Anima claims charity never 'chalange' (B xv 165), a word used by Trevisa in his translation of FitzRalph's *Defensio Curatorum* to mean 'claim or demand by right'.¹⁰⁰ A common image of such illicit secular transactions is 'chaffare' which is often opposed with charity, as for example in Anima's speech ("Charite", quod he, "ne chaffarep no3t, ne chalange. . .", B xv 165); in the C-text, in Rechelesnesse's poverty speech ('riche clerkes, That chaffaren as chapmen', C xii 225–6); and in the Prologue ('Sip charite hap ben chapman . . .', B Pro 64).¹⁰¹ The image is even associated with Haukyn, pedlar of wafers, who in this, as in much else, shadows the friars.¹⁰² Simony (transactions involving spiritual things) is also closely associated, semantically and metrically, with civil law. It is 'Symonie and Cyuyll' (B ii 63ff) who act as Mede's legal advisers; who in the C-text join in appeals to Rome, prompting Conscience to warn the king of the danger they pose to the kingdom, 'but clerkes amende' (C ii 246); and who merge at the court of Westminster: 'tornede Cyuyle into Symonye' (B xx 137).¹⁰³ The opposition between charity and clerical participation in civil lordship may have contributed to the charity/charter variant in Clergie's speech. The B-text reading was printed by Schmidt: 'Of the povere have thei no pite – and that is hir pure charite' (Schmidt, *B-Text*, x 312). The Kane and Donaldson edition has the reconstruction 'Of pe pouere haue pei no pite, and pat is hir [pure chartre]' (B x

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320), which seems to be based on some C-text manuscripts ('Of þe pore haueth thei no pite and þat is here puyre chartre' (C v 166). These variants would be explained if the sound similarity of 'charter' (a document giving legal title to property) and 'charity' had given rise to the association of opposites, and even satirical punning.

Marginal annotation in the *Piers Plowman* manuscripts suggests, especially in C-text manuscripts, that the special significance of charity was a part of the language of the poem's readers. As in the case of the poverty passages, marginal notes often suggest that readers found in the poem linguistic definition or redefinition. Thus in certain C-text manuscripts there are 'charity' subject-headings, and headings for definitions or analyses of the meaning of charity (*distinctiones*). In London University Library S.L.v. 17, British Library Cotton Vespasian B xvi, and Trinity College Dublin 212, 'distinctio caritatis' or 'caritas' is marked at the beginning of Anima's discussion of charity, while B-text Cambridge Trinity College B 15 17 has 'quid est caritas' a few lines earlier; the sixteenth-century British Library Royal 18 B xvii has 'distinctio caritatis'; and beside the line 'Ac biddynge als a beggare byhelde y hym neuere' (C xvi 349), Cambridge University Library Ff 5 35 has 'nota de caritate'. Notes such as these, particularly the '*distinctio*' tradition, support the argument that the usage of 'charity' in the poem has a special, broadly anticlerical, significance.¹⁰⁴ This is supported in a more general way by other kinds of annotation in Anima's speech. There is little manuscript evidence for the early reception of the passages connected with work, begging and almsgiving in Anima's speech, but the one medieval reading tradition that is discernible suggests that the material was viewed in this case as an attack on clerical wealth and rapacity among mendicant and possessioner orders alike, from the viewpoint of the lay almsgiver. In Oriel 79 and its genetic partner Cambridge University Library Ll 4 14 there is a cluster of notes beside the almsgiving passage, but nothing beside the more esoteric 'historical' passages. Oriel 79 shows a response to the satire of 'For þat þei beggen aboute in buyldynge þei spende' (B xv 329), marking the line with the note 'Deridendo', but in neither manuscript is the antifraternality specifically marked.¹⁰⁵ Instead, the passage is marked as a general attack on religious. Both manuscripts paraphrase the subject as 'Dietynge of religious' and 'Of ziftis into Religious'. In addition, there is perhaps the perception of specifically antimonastic feeling, for the passage concerning 'Religieuse þat riche ben' is marked 'Of munkys'.¹⁰⁶

Perhaps the most audacious use of the new anticlerical definition of charity was the presentation, as an act of charity, of the reverse of the usual transaction: disendowment of the clergy by secular lords. The emphasis on clerical possession as a state dependent on charity gave new, fuller, ironic, significance to the old notion that correction was a kind of spiritual almsgiving. Where most B-text manuscripts have 'Good were to deschargen hem for Holy Chirches sake' (Schmidt, *B-Text*, xv 564), the C-text has 'Hit were charite ...' (C xvii 231) and Kane and Donaldson reconstruct on this

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basis '[Charite] were to deschargen hem for holy chirches sake' (B xv 566). There are many examples of this application of 'charity' in Wyclif's writings. In *De Civili Dominio* Wyclif urged that it was a work of charity for secular lords to reduce the clergy to their pristine state when they had become embroiled in secular affairs, and he wrote of correction of the clergy as 'elemosina'.¹⁰⁷ Another example is to be found in Trevisa's translation of Higden's *Polychronicon*. Commenting on King Edgar's attempts to correct the clergy, Trevisa added that just so contemporary monks should be corrected; such disendowment would be 'almesse':

... he was pe firste pat dued monkes in stede of clerkes, for clerkes fliz pe travayle of pe queere, and spende pe catel of holy cherche in oper places at here owne wille, and dede vikars in here stede pat hadde ful litel for to lyve by; and whanne pey wolde nouzt be amended by warnynge of kyng Edgar, noper of bisshop Ethelwolde noper of pe archebisshop Donstan, pe kyng 3af pe provendres of pese chirches to pe forseide vikars. But pe vikars were worse panne pe rapere whan pey were i-made persouns, and lyvede in more outrage pan pe raper dede [here Trevisa departs from the Latin; this insertion does not appear in all the MSS] and now for pe moste partie monkes beep worste of alle, for pey bep to riche, and pat makep hem to take more hede aboute seculer besynesse pan gostely devocioun; perfore, as it is i-seide bifore in 4^o libro in pe 26 capitulo, by Ierom, seppe holy cherche encresede in possessiouns hit hap decresed in vertues. Perfore seculer lordes schulde take away the superfluyte of here possessiouns and 3eve it to hem pat nedep, or elles whan pey knowen pat, pey beep cause and mayntenours of here evel dedes, seppe pey helpep nouzt to amende hit while it is in hir power, what evere covetous preostes seyn. For it were almesse to take away pe superfluite of here possessiouns now, pan it was at pe firste fundacioun to 3eve hem what hem nedede.¹⁰⁸

Nicholas Hereford linked disendowment with charity to the poor; if the king were to take away the superfluous wealth of the clergy he would no longer be required to despoil the poor:

... si rex et regnum vellet eis auferre possessiones et thesauros eorum superfluos ut deberet, tunc non oporteret regem spoliare pauperem comunitatem regni per talagia sicut solet.¹⁰⁹

(... if the king with the government would confiscate their possessions and superfluous treasures as he ought, then it would not be necessary for the king to fleece the poor of the realm through taxation, as is usual.)

The logic of this perception of disendowment proceeded from the anticlerical account of clerical possession. If endowment was an act of charity in which civil dominion over possessions remained with the secular donor, then recovering the donation in order to restore that state would equally be an act of charity. The proponents of this argument looked especially to the crown to disendow the clergy; accordingly theorists such as Adam Easton formulated their defences of possession as comparisons of the powers of the king and pope.

Defenders of clerical possession derived some ammunition from alleging that the motives of the secular powers were less than pure. The records for the

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'Frater Johannes' affair both included the suggestion that the interests of magnates were involved. The text of the recantation of 'Frater Johannes' includes:

... et quia totam Universitatem indebite vexavi, improvide appellando, dominis et magnatibus querelando ...¹¹⁰

(... and I have unduly troubled all the University, by making heedless accusations, by complaining to lords and magnates ...)

About twenty years later the Prior of Durham warned that one John Aley should not answer Wyclif for the Black Monks because members of the King's Council had forbidden it, and must be obeyed because (perhaps with irony) the monks were subject to divine *and* human law.¹¹¹

Opponents of possession turned to history as a source of examples for the relationship they favoured between secular powers and the clergy. Accordingly, Anima associates King Edmund and King Edward with charity:

Edmond and Edward, [eiper] were kynges
And seintes yset; [stille] charite hem folwede. (B xv 223-4)

In the *Polychronicon* the story of St Edmund is followed by an account of his brother Edwold who became a monk after the death of the king. Higden complained that in his day, however, monks had become so caught up by self-seeking that gifts to abbeys were wasted in gluttony rather than used for charity.¹¹² The history of King Edward is one of the specific examples of the charitable and harmonious relationship which formerly existed in England between the church and the temporal powers, in an antipapal document contained in the Rolls of Parliament for 1376. This document probably represents an attack by the laity on papal taxation of the English clergy. It describes how in ancient times kings of England and other nobles established and richly endowed churches, and elections to bishoprics and other benefices were made without simony and papal intervention. While such customs persisted the kingdom was prosperous, crops and animals flourished, and there was peace. Since the perversion of such customs by simony and covetousness the realm has been subject to adversities: wars, famine, pestilence, and the death of animals.¹¹³ Trevisa urged secular lords to chastise the monks in the way that the regular and secular clergy of England were chastised by King Edgar, in the interpolation in the *Polychronicon*, quoted above. Anima also uses the history of the Templars as an example of the correction of clergy:

For coueitise of pat cros [clerkes] of holy kirke
Shul [ouer]torne as templers dide; pe tyme approchep faste.
[Mynne] ye no3t, wise men, how po men honoured
Moore tresor pan troupe? I dar no3t telle pe sope;
Reson and rightful doom p[o] Religiousse d[ampn]jede. (B xv 546-50)

The example of the Templars was used by Wyclif as proof that temporal lords have the power to deprive the clergy of their property if they abuse it.¹¹⁴ Hereford based his demands for disendowment on a similar premise. He

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claimed that the clergy had unjustly and by false title acquired temporal goods, against the wishes of founders; this made them thieves of the goods of others, who perversely defended their wealth against secular claimants.¹¹⁵ But arguments of this sort were also advanced in defence of possession. Thus the treatise *Inveccio Contra Ordinem Monasticum Detrahentes et Loca eorum Destructantes vel Permutantes* defended monastic endowments historically by giving examples of the foundation of monasteries in England by kings and secular nobles, especially King Alfred.¹¹⁶

From FitzRalph's reconciliation of the Franciscan theory of poverty with the Augustinian theory of dominion with grace, therefore, there issued finally a theory of clerical possession which promoted the anticlerical, antipapal cause. On the basis of this theory, secular powers who responsibly exercised civil dominion over temporalities were redeemed by an act of charity which simultaneously redeemed the clergy by restoring them to original dominion. FitzRalph's theory provided a powerful conceptual basis for associating the act of God with the act of the earthly king as acts of charity, and therefore for displacing the papacy with royalty as treasurer of earthly possessions, and the source of earthly authority. In a C-text interpolation this analogy provided the language for reflecting on kingly power; just so, after *De Civili Dominio* Wyclif turned to the question of the office of the king.¹¹⁷ This association of human with divine charity therefore not only authorised the intervention of secular powers in the temporal affairs of the clergy; it gave this intervention a place in salvation history. With an anticlericalism grounded in charity came the title both to clerical possessions, and to a tradition of prophetic, apocalyptic satire which condemned as antichristian those clerics who resisted the claims of the temporal lords on their possessions.

THE LAST DAYS AND THE END OF GLOSING

Thanne cam Coueitise and caste how he myȝte
Ouercome Conscience and Cardinale vertues;
And armed hym in Auarice and hungriliche lyuede.
His wepne was al wiles, to wynnen and to hiden;
Wip glosynges and gabbynges he giled pe peple.
Symonye hym [suede] to assaille Conscience,
And [pressed on] pe [pope] and prelates pei maden
To holden wip Antecrist, hir temporaltees to saue.
And cam to pe kynges counseille as a kene baroun
And [knokked] Conscience in Court afore hem alle;
And garte good feip flee and fals to abide,
And boldeliche bar adoun wip many a bright Noble
Muche of pe wit and wisdom of westmynstre halle. (B xx 121-33)

The act of charity which would restore the clergy to their pristine state had a significance in salvation history. Anticlerical politics, temporal, immediate, intersected with the completed pattern of time, looking forward to the last

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days. Prelates, holding tight their temporalities, sided with Antichrist: '... prelates pei maden To holden wip Antecrist, hir temporaltees to saue'. Anticlericals, opposing them, opposed Antichrist's clergy, returning the clergy to Christ's church. The conflict between the clergy and the anticlericals was the conflict expected for the last days, when the hordes of Antichrist would be confronted by a saviour king. This, in turn, was a rehearsal and presage of the final conflict between Antichrist and the King of Heaven. For prophecies told how history would end with the second coming of the messiah. Then, Christ would defeat Antichrist, in a re-enactment of Christ's earlier conflict with the devil. The first act of charity would be answered with a second intervention, and the pattern of salvation history would be completed. Anticlerical action reciprocated the intervention of divinity in human time with a human act of charity which intersected with salvation history.

Already, traditions of prophecy, and of commentary on prophecy, had described the place of the clergy in the unfolding of world history. Conflicts among clerics over poverty had produced conflicting interpretations of this place. The monks had a view which was opposed by that of the friars. The friars' interpretation was not uniform and, in its more extreme forms, attracted the fire of the secular clergy. Adaptation of the clerical traditions was necessary for the anticlericals to invest their politics with apocalyptic significance. Among the other responsibilities of clerical correction was the creation of an anticlerical apocalypticism.¹¹⁸

The early appearance of apocalypticism in association with the friars is well known, and has been discussed several times in connection with late Middle English literature. It is also well known that apocalyptic writings by William of St Amour, especially his famous tract *De Periculis*, and his *Collectiones*, were early and influential examples of how the friars' apocalypticism might be turned back on the mendicants. William of St Amour issued *De Periculis* in response to the publication in 1254 of the *Introductorius in Evangelium Eternum*.¹¹⁹ This was an interpretation by the Franciscan friar Gerard of Borgo San Donnino of the apocalyptic writings of the twelfth-century abbot Joachim of Fiore. Joachim had predicted that the second coming would be prepared for by a spiritual order of monks. This spiritual order would usher in and embody the third and final *status* in world history. Gerard identified the friars, the new apostles, with this order. Gerard's apocalypticism was especially susceptible to William's satirical treatment, because the friar interpreted Joachim's writings as the everlasting gospel, and saw the friars as its preachers.¹²⁰ For William, this claim coincided neatly with his objections to the friars' pastoral activities, since he held that these activities were based on a false claim to apostolic power. He therefore took the opportunity to satirise the friars' claim by treating them not as the new apostolic order, but as the false hypocrites predicted for the last days. His treatise *De Periculis* therefore took the form of an exposition of 2 Tim. 3, and he gave the attributes predicted there for the false men of the last days an antifraternality

interpretation.¹²¹ The false prophets predicted for the end of time had appeared as these false preachers. Traditionally, many polemicists who turned to Joachimist prophecies interpreted the conflict between those who heralded renewal and those who sided with Antichrist as manifested in the conflict between themselves and their opponents: one group of clergy against another; the true church against its enemies. The antifraternal version of this, developed by William of St Amour in *De Periculis* and the *Collectiones*, remained attractive to later polemicists, as has often been noted. His notion that the friars were precursors of Antichrist, in conflict with the true clergy, persisted. In both Uthred of Boldon's *Contra Querelas Fratrum* and in *Sedens Super Flumina*, the friars were accused of being, secretly, like Nero, the early persecutor of the church who was expected to return in the last days.¹²² The association of the friars with Antichrist was common in Wycliffite writings, as in *Jack Upland*, where the friars are described as 'Pharesies fagyngge pe folk & profetis fals . . . in Antecristis vowarde'; Friar Daw replies that it is Lollards who are antichrists.¹²³ Uthred protested that he was in peril from the false friars. He developed his attack on the friars using texts traditional for satirising clerical hypocrisy, such as Matt. 7:15 and Matt. 23, as well as texts from 2 Tim. 3 which formed the basis of William of St Amour's *De Periculis*. In *De Perfectione Vivendi* and *De Dotacione Ecclesie Sponse Christi* he used 2 Cor. 11 and 2 Tim. 3 to discredit opponents of church property as ministers of Satan, and false apostles.¹²⁴ Likewise, FitzRalph's account of his conflict with the friars in his 'Autobiographical Prayer' seems to include allusions to the perils of 2 Cor. 11, while his most famous London Sermon, *Nemo Vos Seducat*, was based on an exposition of 2 Tim. 3. His enemies at Avignon retaliated by denouncing him as Antichrist and the devil incarnate.¹²⁵ Although William's apocalyptic polemic was an important influence on subsequent writings, as with the other aspects of his antifraternal satire, the grounds of his use of it were not shared by FitzRalph and his anticlerical followers.¹²⁶ The late fourteenth century had inherited other examples of apocalyptic writing which were even more fitted for giving contemporary anticlericalism a place in salvation history. The later development of apocalyptic polemic by the friars, in particular, made it appropriate for the new anticlericalism.

In the friars' interpretation of the Apocalypse the mendicants' evangelical poverty became identified with the full revelation of charity expected for the last days. The return to apostolic purity was also a renewal, and a fulfilment. In this way, the friars were thought of as 'spiritual' clerics who were the antithesis of Antichrist's clergy. Their opponents and opposites were the possessioners whose resistance to poverty marked them out as the carnal clergy of Antichrist's church:

For now he hap dronken so depe he wole deuyne soone
And preuen it by hir Pocalips and passion of Seint Auereys
That neiper bacon ne braun, blancmanger ne morttrews,
Is neiper fissh n[e] flessh, but fode for a penaunt. (B XIII 90-3)

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It is possible that the dismissive reference here to the Doctor of Divinity's apocalypse ('hir Pocalips') – tellingly associated with that mark of carnality, Averroism – refers to such a tradition. An important example was the *Postilla* on the Apocalypse by the Franciscan friar Peter John Olivi, which was condemned by John XXII in 1326. Whereas Gerard of Borgo San Donnino had identified Joachim's works as the revelation of the meaning of the Old and New Testaments, Olivi built on St Francis's account of the source and nature of his rule and order, showing that this was the realisation of charity predicted by Joachim for the last days. To St Francis it had been revealed that evangelical poverty was to be followed literally; thus the rule was never to be glossed. For Olivi, the Franciscan Rule was the new gospel, and St Francis was in the spirit of the returning Christ. Thus evangelical poverty acquired an apocalyptic significance. The return to apostolic purity was also a progress towards a future age of the spirit, a time in which what had been figured would be made plain, in which scriptural truth would be lived. Such notions were far-reaching among the more radical friars. Olivi's prophetic works were greatly influential among the Spiritual Franciscans and sects such as the Beguins.¹²⁷ There are signs that the tradition was still flourishing among some Franciscans in Avignon during the 1350s, when FitzRalph's case was in progress. There friars were predicting that the King of France would assist a Franciscan angelic pope to usher in an age of poverty.¹²⁸ At the time of Olivi's *Postilla* there seems to have begun a tradition among the Austin friars, who also claimed to be the spiritual order predicted for the last days by Joachim.¹²⁹ The satirical commentary on the prophecies of John of Bridlington by the Austin friar John Erghome may be an example of the continuation of this tradition during the later fourteenth-century conflict over poverty and possession.¹³⁰ Olivi's work too, evidently, was known in England during this period, and was a source of controversy. This is indicated by William Woodford's cautious attribution of Olivi's writings in the *Postilla super Matthaeum* to 'quidam postillator' ('a certain commentator'), and by a reference in the *Opus Arduum* (1389–90) to the burning of Olivi's works in Oxford and Salisbury.¹³¹

Sixteenth-century readers, in another age of anticlericalism, were much impressed by the anticlerical apocalypticism they found in *Piers Plowman*. For example, in his first edition of the poem (1550), the Protestant printer Crowley alerted his readers to the disendowment passages by marking 'Reade thys' beside Clergie's speech, and 'How couetise of ye cleargy wyll destroy the church' beside Anima's.¹³² Many readers in the sixteenth century and later wrote similar comments in the margins of the manuscripts. The B-text Laud Misc. 581, for example, has 'a king shall com & Reforme religioun'; 'Abbot of Abindoun'; and 'Caym shall awake' in a late hand beside Clergie's speech.¹³³ Similarly the B-text Cambridge University Library Ll 4 14 has here 'The Abusions of ye Religious' and 'A prophecy agaynste ye Relygyouse'.¹³⁴ The sixteenth-century response to the poem is well known, but it has not been properly recognised that medieval readers

had entered similar annotations in their manuscripts. For them too the poem's anticlerical apocalypticism was highly charged with significance. In C-text manuscripts there is a clear tradition of alerting readers to apocalyptic or prophetic passages by marking the note 'prophecy' beside certain lines, thus establishing a tradition which the later readers were to follow. Such notes are common in Resoun's sermon, where the lines which speak of a king correcting the religious have 'prophecy', or less often a *nota*, marked in many manuscripts.¹³⁵ In other cases, the note 'prophecy' is marked beside two Latin quotations, perhaps as if they were the text of the prophecy; this is the practice in Huntington Library HM 137, and Laud Misc. 656.¹³⁶ Huntington Library HM 143 attributes the prophecy to Piers, marking 'prophecias Petri' in the margin.¹³⁷ Several of these manuscripts showing the characteristic pair of notes here have very little or almost no other medieval marginal annotation; examples are Laud Misc. 656, Digby 171 which marks 'prophecy' in a few other places, and Huntington Library HM 137 and Trinity College Dublin 212 which have related traditions of sparse marginalia. Anima's disendowment speech is less thickly annotated than the earlier passage, but the same pattern emerges, with many C-text manuscripts marking the lines concerning correction by disendowment with the note 'prophecy', while later hands in both versions have followed the tradition with such notes as 'couetise shall cause the chirche to be lowed', and 'Templarij: prophetia de possessionibus clericorum'.¹³⁸ Oriel 79 marks 'war' in the margin.¹³⁹

In Oriel 79 an annotation appears which may indicate close knowledge of the controversies over the interpretation of Joachim. It occurs beside the appearance of Antichrist in B xx:

Antecrist cam panne, and al pe crop of trupe
Torned it [tid] vp so down and ouertilte pe roote,
And [made] fals sprynge and sprede and spedde mennes nedes.

(B xx 53-5)

Here the medieval annotator quotes a passage from Jerome's commentary on Dan. 12:12:

'Beatus qui expectat et peruenit vsque ad dies 1335.' 'Beatus' inquit, qui interfecto Antechristo dies supra numerum prefinitum 45 prestolatur: quibus et Dominus Saluator in sua magestate venturus est.¹⁴⁰

('Blessed is he who waits and survives until 1335 days have passed.' 'Blessed', he says, is he who, after the death of Antechrist remains for forty-five days beyond the aforesaid number, when the lord saviour is to come in majesty.)

Jerome's commentary was included in the *Glossa Ordinaria*, and had become the standard explanation of a discrepancy in Dan. 12 over the length of time predicted for Antichrist's reign.¹⁴¹ In Dan. 12:11 it is predicted that the period of 'abomination' will last 1290 days, but Dan. 12:12 mysteriously gives a figure of 1335 days for the duration of this period: 'Happy the man who waits and lives to see the completion of one thousand three hundred and

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thirty-five days!’ In his commentary, Jerome explained the discrepancy of forty-five days by saying that this would be a period of silence on earth between the death of Antichrist and the second coming, to test the patience of the saints.¹⁴² The concept of an earthly period after the destruction of Antichrist, which seems to owe much to Jerome’s commentary, was well known in the late medieval period; examples in English include the *Cursor Mundi* and the *Prick of Conscience*.¹⁴³ Therefore the quotation of Jerome’s commentary in Oriel 79 beside the appearance of Antichrist may indicate no more than familiarity with a standard gloss. However, as there is no quotation of, or obvious allusion to, Dan. 12:12 in the *Piers Plowman* passage, the annotation may have been prompted by its polemical associations. There is some evidence that the concept of a period on earth after the destruction of Antichrist became an issue in the conflict between the mendicants and the seculars in Paris in the thirteenth century. Commentators after Jerome had elaborated on his interpretation. In the ninth century Haimo of Auxerre linked the last period with the ministers of Antichrist of Matt. 24 and the Pauline texts, explaining that the last period would be a time for the destruction of the ministers of Antichrist, and a time of penance for those who had wavered during Antichrist’s reign. Twelfth-century commentators, including Joachim of Fiore, took up Haimo’s interpretation, and introduced the notion that the last period of silence was a time to be anticipated with gladness by the elect who had not wavered.¹⁴⁴ The notion became an important element in the propaganda issued by members of the mendicant orders, who exploited Joachim’s prophecies by claiming that theirs were the new orders of spiritual clerics predicted for the final age. The strategy here seems to have prompted an attack on Joachimist chronology in the *De Antichristo*. This tract, possibly written by William of St Amour, or a follower, denies that there is to be a peaceful seventh age on earth at all, and proposes other interpretations for Dan. 12:12.¹⁴⁵ However, there is little evidence that this attack on the Joachimist time-scheme was remembered in subsequent stages of the conflict with the friars, or indeed that it was remembered at all. While there are numerous examples of the use of Jerome’s exegesis, there is little to suggest that later writers were interested in the alternative view.¹⁴⁶ The *De Antichristo* itself does not seem to have been widely circulated, and there seems to be no evidence that it was known in England.¹⁴⁷ The medieval annotator of Oriel 79 followed the better-known tradition when he marked the appearance of Antichrist as a sign of the imminence of a brief final peaceful period before the second coming and the last judgement, whether or not he knew the polemical implications of this gloss.¹⁴⁸

The new anticlericalism required that the old traditions, used by groups of warring clerics against each other, be adapted to the new conflict. For example, friars themselves might be seen as examples of Antichrist’s clergy, since they falsely imitated and denied true charity, having acquired rights in pastoral care. For anticlericals, moreover, the tradition was applicable to other clerics too. *All* the clergy were potentially suspect as Antichrist’s

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followers. Thus in *Piers Plowman* prelates hold with Antichrist, and possessioners and mendicants alike are his followers:

Freres folwede pat fend for he gaf hem copes,
And Religiose reuerenced hym and rongen hir belles,
And al pe Couent cam to welcome [a] tyraunt
And alle hise as wel as hym, saue oonly fooles ... (B xx 58-61)

Clerics are not the locus of political or spiritual regeneration here. Whereas the Franciscan Joachimists had made St Francis the embodiment of charity, prophet and forerunner of the returning Christ, in *Piers Plowman* the leader of the opposition to Antichrist and defender of Unity is not a cleric. It is Piers Plowman to whom are entrusted the keys of heaven, and who is the antithesis and opponent of earthly popes who claim Peter's power.¹⁴⁹ Piers is the embodiment of living charity, in whom hopes rest:

'This Iesus of his gentries wol Iuste in Piers armes,
In his helm and in his haubergeon, *humana natura* ...' (B XVIII 22-3)

By contrast, the outward appearance of the clergy is no guarantee of their own inner charity, nor of their access to charity:

'Wipouten help of Piers Plowman', quod he, 'his persone sestow neuere.'
'Wheiper clerkes knowen hym', quod I, 'pat kepen holi kirke?'
'Clerkes haue no knowyng', quod he, 'but by werkes and wordes.
Ac Piers pe Plowman parceyuep moore depper
What is pe wille and wherfore pat many wight suffrep ...
And pat knowep no clerk ne creature on erpe
But Piers pe Plowman, *Petrus id est christus* ...' (B xv 196-200; 211-12)

Thus apocalypticism confirmed the authority of charity as the ground of anticlericalism. It derogated from the temporal authority of the clergy. It gave political action against the clergy by temporal lords a place in salvation history, underwriting the conclusions of the anticlerical theorists with ultimate authority.

Political purification of the clergy had a further, literary, corollary. Clerical apocalypticism, especially the Franciscan interpretation of Joachim, associated a purified clergy with the full realisation of the meaning of the gospel. A spiritual order for Joachim, preachers of the eternal gospel for Gerard, St Francis himself for Olivi, all completed scriptural truth, fulfilled the gospel. The spiritual order fulfilled scriptural prophecy; friars preached the eternal gospel, apostles of the returning Christ; St Francis lived the evangelical life. Against these were pitted clerics who, denying poverty, denied and obscured truth; clerics who were false prophets and false apostles. Just so, in *Piers Plowman* the clerics who follow Antichrist are 'glosers', and the false brethren of the last days. In B xix 'curatours' are identified with 'false prophetes fele, flatereris and gloseris' (B xix 221), while, as has been noted, the Great Doctor is both a 'gloser' and one of the false brethren warned of by the apostle Paul (2 Cor. 11:26). Again, 'sire *Penetrans domos*' (B xx 34off) is a

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gloser and flatterer. In the new anticlericalism, to purify the clergy politically was also to bring about the end of glosing. Temporal correction of the clergy in *Piers Plowman* is thus associated, as it had been in earlier apocalyptic polemic, with the realisation of the full meaning of the gospel. But if the meaning of charity was to be realised in the last age, then it was not the clergy which could give access to that meaning. Realising the full meaning of the gospel meant for the anticlericals recovering dominion over scripture, as well as dominion over temporalities. In the new anticlerical apocalypse in *Piers Plowman* it is conscience which becomes the site of truth. The political act of charity was to be completed in the Christian conscience. It falls to Piers Plowman to harrow 'al Holy Scripture' (B xix 272) and to 'tilie trupe' (B xix 261), but landlordship is granted to Conscience.¹⁵⁰ With Conscience is to be located the renewal and fulfilment of scriptural truth. Thus the role of the king, responsible for amending the clergy, gives way, in the last two passus, to the role of Conscience. Grace, distributing gifts, instructs the folk 'crounep Conscience kyng' (B xix 256). When the king claims power, it is Conscience who spells out restraining conditions. When 'Antecrist ouer alle folk regnede' (B xx 64) kings flocked to Antichrist's banner:

[And] *pat* were mylde men and holye *pat* no meschief dradden;
Defyed alle falsnesse and folk *pat* it vsede;
And what kyng *pat* hem conforted, knowynge [hir gile],
They cursed and hir conseil, were it clerk or lewed. (B xx 65-8)

At the end of the poem it is left to Conscience to seek Piers, and the correction of the friars. Finally, the renewal of charity must be located in the conscience of every Christian. The clergy are of charity but an empty figure:

For thogh me souhte alle *pe sektes* of susturne and of brethurne,
And fynde hym, but figuratyfly, a ferly me thynketh;
Hic in enigmate, tunc facie ad faciem. (C xvi 293-4a)

The work of the poem does not end with the final dream. The work of the poem, the work of charity, rests with Conscience.

Antireligious traditions and a new satire in the C-text

THE DOMINION OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS AND THE NEW ANTICLERICALISM

Loke now where this lollares and lewede ermites,
 Yf they breke pis obedience pat beth so fer fram chirche.
 Where se we hem on Sonendayes the seruise to here,
 As matynes by pe morwe? Til masse bygynne,
 Or Sonendayes at euensong, se we wel fewe,
 Or labory for here lyflode as pe lawe wolde.
 Ac aboute mydday at mele-tyme y mette with hem ofte,
 Come in his cope as he a clerk were;
 A bachelor or a bew-pere beste hym bysmede,
 And for pe cloth pat keuereth hym ykald he is a frere... (C IX 240-9)

The loller is called a friar 'for pe cloth pat keuereth hym': because he wears a habit. Faus Semblant, in the *Roman de la Rose*, quoted (and exemplified) a well-known proverb which summed up a tradition: 'la robe ne fet pas le moine'.¹ In traditional satire against the religious orders, wearing the habit signifies deceptive appearances, false-seeming. On the surface, it shows adherence to the rule of a religious order. Underneath, it may conceal the opposite. The satirists often borrowed imagery from Matt. 7:15: 'Beware of false prophets, men who come to you dressed up as sheep while underneath they are savage wolves.' Thus Faus Semblant:

Dehors semblons aigneaus pitables,
 dedanz somes lous ravisables...²

Another image common in traditional antireligious satire was that of the fox dressed in a habit. Faus Semblant confesses to 'renardie' – 'foxiery' – in the Middle English translation.³ Use of the image for friars in the *Collectiones* by William of St Amour explains why antireligious satirists found the tradition so attractive. Foxes, as William explains, were thought to feign death in order to deceive; just so, some of those who wear the habit merely feign 'death to the world'.⁴ A sixteenth-century reader of a C-text manuscript of *Piers Plowman* pointed to a link with such antireligious traditions, when he wrote 'Religion of Fals Semblant' beside the passage about Antichrist's orders:⁵

Freres folewede pat fende, for he 3af hem copes,
 And religious reuerensd hym and rongen here belles... (C XXII 58-9)

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But the contribution of Faus Semblant and related antireligious traditions to the satire of *Piers Plowman* is not quite so direct as the sixteenth-century note implies. False-seeming is not simply an antireligious topic in *Piers Plowman*. In *Piers Plowman* the traditional topics and language of satire are used in untraditional ways. As an image of falseness to a religious rule, the habit which conceals treachery or trickery has little importance here. The images traditional in antireligious satire of the fox or wolf concealed by a habit have contributed little to the poem. The C-text revision of Anima's 'Loken as lambren and semen [lif]holy' (B xv 206) includes the 'wolf' element of the tradition: 'And as lambes they loke and lyuen as wolues' (C xvi 270). In the B-text, however, the wolf element is all but absent, appearing only in manuscript R, and even here the reading is not certain, for the word is misspelt.⁶ Only with the variant in manuscript F of 'foxly' is the other image from the satirical tradition included. The lollers in the extract from C IX are not strictly wolves in sheep's clothing, but rather are wolves in the sheep-fold:

Certes, ho-so durste sygge hit, Simon *quasi dormit*;
Vigilare were fayrere, for thow haste a greet charge.
For many wakere wolues ar wroken into thy foldes... (C IX 257-9)

The wolf in sheep's clothing might signify mere seeming adherence to a religious rule, but the wolf in the sheep-fold signals danger in the parishes. The precise vocation of the lollers in the extract is casually indeterminate: 'as he a clerk were; A bachelor or a bew-pere' (C IX 247-8). Characteristically, in *Piers Plowman*, false-seeming is imputed to secular clerics as well as to members of religious orders, and even to those who are not clerics at all, with a loaded imprecision:

... lefte they here labour, thise lewede knaues,
And clothed hem in copes, clerkes as hit were,
Or oen of som ordre or elles a profete... (C IX 209-11)

The familiar antireligious proverb quoted and exemplified by Faus Semblant, 'la robe ne fet pas le moine', and the associated biblical image of the wolf in sheep's clothing (Matt. 7:15) are in *Piers Plowman* associated with those who do not claim to follow a religious rule, most notably, with the poet 'as I a sheep were; In habite as an heremite, vnholly of werkes' (B Pro 2-3); and in the C-text 'yclothed as a lollare' (C v 2) in Cornhill, while in other cases it seems to refer both to laymen and religious; in Anima's speech it is false beggars who 'Loken as lambren and semen [lif]holy'.

The old topics and themes of traditional antireligious satire attacked disregard of the religious rule. They illustrated, or expressed figuratively, apostasy from the rule. The false-seeming topics are characteristic, for 'renardie', and sheep's clothing, impute a hidden apostasy. The rule and the order's tradition were the satirist's source of authority, the basis of his charges against his victims. Untraditional use of the old satirical topics in *Piers Plowman* manifests a new approach to the religious orders. Extension of

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the satire with studied casualness to non-religious, to secular clerics and laity, and the diminished force of some of the traditional false-seeming topics, imply a disregard for the authority of the rules of the orders as standards by which to judge their members. Such a disregard of their traditional authority was potentially much more dangerous to the orders than traditional anti-religious satire and polemic, because it challenged their very existence. It was characteristic of the new anticlericalism.

What might be defined as a *radically* antireligious element in late fourteenth-century anticlericalism is clearest and perhaps most recognised in the controversy over 'private religions'. The attack in the late fourteenth century on the authority of the regular orders is widely considered distinctive of the thought of Wyclif and his followers.⁷ While this is undeniably true, it was part of the broader anticlerical attack on the orders, manifested in anti-fraternal and antimonastic challenges to mendicancy and endowment. It may also be reflected in the preferences of the laity of this period for the less institutional orders, such as that of members of the court of Richard II for the Carthusians.⁸ It is arguable that the basis for this radically antireligious position was already implicit in the seculars' attack on the friars earlier in the century. The position was, perhaps, the inevitable, if ironic, outcome of the seculars' appropriation of Franciscan evangelicalism. The Franciscan profession was itself antireligious, both in the traditional way and in a more radical way. In the traditional sense, it was antireligious because, as a profession of austerity and service, it impugned the luxury and complacency of the older orders. It was also radically antireligious because of its foundation on biblical authority. The Franciscans claimed the gospel for their rule, thus undermining the authority of other orders who found their authority in their tradition of adherence to a rule. When the anticlericals made evangelical poverty their own authority, they too took a position which implicitly undermined the authority of the religious rule, and thus divested the religious orders of dominion. The antireligious component of the new account of clerical dominion was implicit in, and may even have been apparent as early as, FitzRalph's campaign. It is apparent in FitzRalph's application of the Franciscan rule of poverty to all the orders of friars, not simply the Franciscans, and also in his claim that it could not be meritorious to take a *vow* of poverty. When they made this last assertion a point of contention with FitzRalph, it may be that the friars perceived its implications for the authority of the religious life; this is almost certainly why the question of the vow of poverty preoccupied Maidstone and Ashwardby during their debate later in the century. When antifraternality became incorporated in a movement more widely anticlerical, then the implications of these arguments for all the religious orders were developed. This is apparent in Wyclif's writings from the mid 1370s, for example in *De Civili Dominio*. Here Wyclif argued that the law of Christ, as expressed in the Bible and followed in the primitive church, was sufficient. This law rendered all human traditions

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either superfluous, because they were no different from Christ's law, or sinful, because they did not conform with it. Religion was not a matter of dress, or observances, but of adherence to Christ's law. The rules adopted by the religious orders were themselves therefore 'new' traditions, with no authority.⁹ Such seems to have been the theme of Wyclif's earlier work *De Religione*, a work now lost, which was probably composed before, and may have been partly preserved in, *De Civili Dominio*.¹⁰ An index of the emergence of the status and authority of the religious orders as a theme of controversy is given by the changing positions of the monks and friars. As has been noted in chapters 3 and 4, at first the mendicants and the possessioners were opponents over the poverty question, and although this continued, new alliances were also made, when both sides found common cause against Wyclif. Adaptations of the Monk of Bury's Treatise reflect this change in priorities, as do the changing purposes and targets of Uthred's polemics, while William Woodford (anticipated to some extent by Roger Conway) was perhaps the first polemicist for the friars to see that defending his order meant abandoning traditional (antireligious) claims for the superior status of the Franciscan rule, and defending 'private' religions.¹¹

Since the new anticlericalism called into question the authority of the profession founded on tradition, it is not surprising that in *Piers Plowman* this new approach to the religious life is especially apparent in connection with historical themes. Many of the instances of polemical history in the poem illustrate this. The legends about the exemplars and leaders of various religious orders, Paul the first hermit, the first monk Antony, Dominic, Francis, Benedict and Bernard, are used in *Piers Plowman* in a way which erodes the distinctions between the different orders rather than, traditionally, supporting the claims of one order against another. The adaptation of the old traditions for broadly anticlerical purposes was thus based on a radically antireligious position which denied the authority of individual orders. Where origins and tradition are used to attack the present state of the orders, in the demands to reduce the religious to their first state, the law of charity, rather than the religious rule, is the authority. One consequence of such an approach was that any religious order not ratified by biblical authority, however long a tradition it had, might be considered a 'new' order. Thus, when Anima attacks 'pise newe clerkes' (B xv 373) for their neglect of learning it is possible that 'newe' has a polemical sense of 'non-apostolic', as widely recorded in antireligious phrases in Wycliffite writings.¹²

As its origins suggest, the question of the authority of the religious orders was especially associated with the controversy over religious poverty and mendicancy. The seculars' refusal to distinguish between lay and religious idlers was embedded in, and asserted by, the new analysis and language of poverty, as was the anticlerical linking of religious 'possessioners' with lay lords. The polemical language and analysis of poverty traced in *Piers Plowman* was therefore potentially at the heart of the controversy over the

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orders. The new poverty polemic called into question the authority of religious orders whatever their theories of poverty, whether the monastic theory of common property or the friars' theory of mendicancy. The loss of the authority of the religious order and its rule had profound and inescapable consequences for the traditional antireligious satire which it underpinned. The loss of the authority of the rule meant that the old force and meaning of traditional images and metaphors were diminished. Anticlerical satirists were obliged to adapt the old tradition, if they were to use it at all. Furthermore, such an adaptation would itself be a powerful anticlerical act. Anticlericalism demanded a new version of the old satire.

Adaptation of a sort had already been undertaken by antifraternal satirists. The antireligious claims of the friars for the superiority of their order had already given rise to a specialised antireligious satire adapted to the special claims of the orders of friars. The old satire was not quite appropriate for antifraternal writers because the friars claimed that the pattern and authority for their profession was to be found in the gospel. Accordingly, in apocalyptic satire against the friars, traditional topics against false religious were associated with apocalyptic texts and topics, to show that those who claimed to follow the apostolic pattern for their rule were false to that pattern, and were really to be recognised as apostate religious. Thus William of St Amour warned of the perils of false friars in *De Periculis* and the *Collectiones*, developing the traditional satire against false religious largely by using apocalyptic texts and metaphors. In *De Periculis* the wolves in sheep's clothing of Matt. 7:15 are associated with the false men of the last days in 2 Tim. 3:5, 'men who preserve the outward form of religion, but are a standing denial of its reality'.¹³ Again, in the *Collectiones* he linked the perils from 'falsi fratres' with apocalyptic texts:

Quasi diceret [Rev. 6:1-6 and gloss], *Isti Falsi Fratres, quos praemittit Diabolus Antichristo, sub habitu Religionis persequentur Ecclesiam, primo vtendo fraude hypocrisis, ad instar Haereticorum; deinde violentia manifesta, ad instar Tyrannorum.*¹⁴

(It is as if he said [Rev. 6:1-6 and gloss], 'These false brethren/friars [*Fratres*], whom the devil sends before Antichrist, will persecute the church disguised by the religious habit. At first they used the deception of hypocrisy, like the heretics; later they used open violence, like the tyrants'.)

The new anticlericalism similarly called for a new version of the old satire against religious. That obligation was met in the C-text of *Piers Plowman*. The new anticlerical approach to the orders is implicit in the anticlericalism of the poem, but it is only in the new C-text material that its implications for satire are fully exploited. If 'reckless' did indeed connote 'lack of anxiety' and 'disregard for a religious rule', then Rechelesnesse's speech is a C-text interpolation on poverty distinguished by a new sense of the implications of poverty for the religious life. It is in the other two major C-text interpolations that antireligious traditions are transformed into a new anticlerical satire.

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FROM THE GYROVAGUE TO THE LOLLER

... an ydel man pow semest,
A spendour pat spene mot or a spille-tyme,
Or beggest thy bylyue aboute at men hacches
Or faytest vpon Frydayes or feste-dayes in churches,
The whiche is lollarne lyf, pat lytel is preysed
There ryhtfulnesse rewardeth ryht as men deserueth. (C v 27–32)

And what freke on this folde fiscuth aboute
With a bagge at his bak a begyneld wyse,
And can eny craft in caes he wolde hit vse,
Thorw which craft a couthe come to bred and to ale
And ouer-more to an hater to hele with his bonis,
And lyueth lyke a lollare, goddes lawe hym dampneth. (C ix 153–8)

The poet describes his life 'yclothed as a lollare' (C v 2) in London's Cornhill, in a long interpolation in C v. As a loller, he used to visit generous patrons, preferring to beg rather than to work manually, until called to account by Resoun and Consience. Lollers of much the same kind are described in another long interpolation in C ix. These lollers too prefer a life of vagrant mendicancy to manual labour. This preference distinguishes them from the poor of other kinds. The loller of Cornhill in *passus* v of the C-text, and the lollers of C ix, are linked by their behaviour with that figure of antireligious satire known as the gyrovague.¹⁵ The gyrovague was a false religious whose apostasy from the rule was figured by his behaviour of going from house to house in search of hospitality, when he should have stayed in the cloister. The gyrovague tradition was perhaps the first form of Christian antireligious satire, since its origins lie with the origin of Christian monasticism itself. In this tradition the apostate from the rule was treated as a kind of false hermit. Since the fundamental characteristic of the false religious was that he did not live according to a monastic rule, but merely feigned a contemplative way of life for his own worldly purposes, his life was therefore often compared with that of the true hermit, for both were kinds of monk who did not live under the rule of an order. The life of the false hermit was a travesty of that of the true hermit; where the true hermit abandoned the common life of the monastery to achieve perfection in solitude, the false religious was a false hermit because he abandoned the rule for his own purposes. Since the concept of the false hermit was so closely related to the essence of monasticism, it is no surprise that its sources are ancient, and closely linked with monastic rules. Many of the ancient writings which treat of the false hermit were brought together in the *Concordia Regularum*, a collection of monastic rules made by Benedict of Aniane, who flourished around the end of the eighth century.¹⁶ These include chapters from the sixth-century rules written by Benedict of Nursia, and by an anonymous author known as the Master, as well as excerpts from Jerome's Epistle *Ad Eustochium*, Augustine's *De Opere Monachorum* and Cassian's *Conferences*. The ancient authorities provided much material – often as direct quotation – for later satirical texts.

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The tradition was appropriate for a satire which would give form to the new anticlerical analysis of poverty, because it was itself associated with the classification and definition of religious. For example, in his Epistle *Ad Eustochium*, Jerome described the lives of monks in Egypt, which he divided into three kinds. He described the communal life followed by coenobitic monks, the life of solitude and privation followed by anchorites, who imitated John the Baptist and Paul, and the contrastingly depraved life of false hermits, who lived in little groups in cities, under no rule.¹⁷ Cassian followed Jerome in his classification of Egyptian monks, but divided the false hermits into two groups, distinguishing those whose lives were a travesty of the communal monastic life from those who were to be contrasted with the solitary anchorite. To members of the first group he gave the name 'sara-baite'.¹⁸ Cassian's four kinds of monk provided the basis for the classification of monks which forms the first chapter in the Master's Rule and Benedict's Rule. Here four kinds of monk were distinguished: the coenobite who followed the monastic rule within a monastery, the anchorite or hermit, who lived in solitary contemplation, the sarabaite, who, with a few fellows, set up his own community and lived as he pleased, and the gyrovague, a solitary apostate from monastic life.¹⁹ Benedict preferred to pass briefly over the last kind, but the Master (who seems to have coined the term 'gyrovagus') characterised them in a lengthy satirical passage.²⁰ Later writers combined material from these sources to make even more complex classifications. Isidore, in *De Officiis Ecclesiasticis*, enumerated six kinds of monk, three laudable kinds, coenobite, anchorite and hermit, and three evil kinds, false anchorite (based on Cassian's fourth type), sarabaite and a wandering genus based on descriptions of idle monks in Augustine's *De Opere Monachorum*.²¹

The debt of the portraits of the *Piers Plowman* lollers to the gyrovague tradition is easily demonstrated by a comparison with the sources of the satire. What the loller owes most to the gyrovague is a pattern of vagrant behaviour, characterised by various ruses for finding a living without working. The lollers exhibit the traditional behaviour of wandering about in search of food, and of living apart, in separate establishments, or in cities. They are wandering beggars who visit here and there in search of food. A passage of vivid description is devoted to this behaviour in C IX. Here a loller is pictured enjoying a host's hospitality, stretching out in front of the fire in the evening, drinking well, and then retiring for the night before moving off the next day in search of good food elsewhere:

For they bereth none bagges ne boteles vnder clokes,
The whiche is lollarne lyf and lewede ermytes,
Pat loken loughliche to lache men almesse,
In hope to sitte at euen by pe hote coles,
Vnlouke his legges abroad or ligge at his ese,
Reste hym and roste him and his rug turne,
Drynke druie and depe and drawe hym thenne to bedde,
And whenne hym lyketh and luste, his leue is to ryse,

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And when he is rysen, rometh out and riȝt wel aspyeth
Where he may rathest haue a repaest or a ronde of bacoun,
Suluer or sode mete and sum tyme bothe,
Loef oper half-loef other a lompe of chese;
And caryeth hit hoem to his cote and cast hym to lyuene
In idelnesse and in ese and by otheres trauayle. (C IX 139-52)

Lollers are 'ouer-land strikares' (C IX 159) who live 'by the heye weye' (C IX 188). The Cornhill loller gains a living visiting his benefactors in turn, doing the rounds every month:

... tho pat fynden me my fode fouchen-saf, y trowe,
To be welcome when y come, oper-while in a monthe,
Now with hym, now with here; on this wyse y begge... (C v 49-51)

Both the Cornhill loller and the lollers in C IX are associated with cottage-dwelling, and with cities. In C IX lollers live 'as coterelles' (C IX 193) and 'in borwes among brewesteres' (C IX 189); the false hermit carries his winnings 'hoem to his cote' (C IX 151), while the Cornhill loller lives 'in a cote' (C v 2) in Cornhill, part of the city of London. It is his practice 'in citees to begge' (C v 90). Living apart in their own small establishments and living in cities were also characteristics of false hermits. Living apart, as in cities, or separate dwellings, were useful signs or images of apostasy from the rule. Members of Jerome's genus of evil monks are city-dwellers, while Cassian's sarabaites live alone, or with one or two companions, apart from the monastery, as do the sarabaites in Benedict's Rule, and the Master's Rule.²² Vagrancy was also characteristic of false hermits. Wandering about was one of the activities attributed to idle monks by Augustine, in *De Opere Monachorum*.²³ This was a most important passage for later writers in the tradition. It appears in Benedict of Aniane's chapter on monastic genera, where it is included under Isidore's fifth genus of monk:

Quintum genus est circellionum, qui sub habitu monachorum usquequaque vagantur, venalem circumferentes hypocrisim, circumeuntes provincias: nusquam missi, nusquam fixi, nusquam stantes, nusquam sedentes.²⁴

(The fifth kind is that of 'circelliones', who roam about everywhere in monastic habits, circulating venal hypocrisy, going about the provinces: sent nowhere, attached nowhere, staying nowhere, resting nowhere.)

Cassian attributed similar behaviour to sarabaites, who were free to wander about as they pleased.²⁵ This behaviour provided the name and essence of the gyrovague, first introduced in the Master's Rule.²⁶ Here, wandering about was associated with obtaining an easy living from patrons and benefactors. The gyrovagues of the Master's Rule use many of the same strategies to find and exploit patrons as the *Piers Plowman* lollers. Just as the lollers 'loken loughliche to lache men almesse' (C IX 141), so the gyrovagues pretend to be humble, bowing their heads when with their hosts.²⁷ Both feign sickness to excite sympathy: the gyrovague by walking with a bent back ('lordicando'), lollers by pretending to be lame, or by breaking the limbs of their children:

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Or pe bak or som bon pey breke of here children
And goen and fayten with here fauntes for eueremore aftur.
Ther aren mo mysshape amonges suche beggars
Then of many opere men pat on this molde walken. (C IX 169–72)

In addition, according to the etymology given in the *Piers Plowman* passage, 'lollen' means 'to go lamely'.²⁸ Trickery is also implied by the suggestion that these lollers who claim to be clerics are really workmen, or at least were formerly workmen. This was a traditional claim. In *De Opere Monachorum* Augustine wrote that very often false hermits were newly freed slaves, or rustics who had been labourers and craftsmen before they became contemplatives. The motives of contemplatives who refused to work manually were therefore always suspect; perhaps they had become monks simply to escape poverty and hard work, to obtain better food and clothing, and to gain a superior position to that of their former masters.²⁹ This aspect of the tradition is emphasised in *Piers Plowman*. Formerly the lollers had been workmen with long hours and little reward, such as weavers, tailors and carters' boys, who had joined religious orders when they saw that wearing a habit meant an easier, richer living:

Ac thise ermytes pat edifiën thus by the heye weye
Whilen were werkmen, webbes and taylours
And carteres knaues and clerkes withouten grace,
Holden ful hungry hous and hadde muche defaute,
Long labour and litte wynnyng, and at the laste they aspyde
That faytede in frere clothinge hadde fatte chekes. (C IX 203–8)

He who formerly worked for a meagre living, as a religious is finely dressed, well fed and treated with respect.³⁰

The history of the adaptation of the gyrovagae tradition in the service of a new satire based on radically antireligious principles might be said to begin with its use against the friars in the thirteenth century. Its adaptation there is an example of the adaptation of antireligious satire necessitated by the friars' special claims for their status. Surprisingly little attention has been paid to the use of the gyrovagae tradition in the literature of the thirteenth-century controversy between the seculars and mendicants, even though the importance of the gyrovagae, especially in the antifraternel writings of William of St Amour, has been remarked.³¹ A precedent for William's use of the tradition may be found in the satires of those twelfth-century writers who wished to attack the claims of the newer monastic orders, such as the Cistercians and Carthusians, and the Augustinian Canons. These newer foundations offended by claiming to re-establish the ideals of primitive monasticism through communal poverty and pastoral service. Their opponents, such as Payen Bolotin, Ivo of Chartres and Nigel Longchamps attempted to ridicule and discredit their claims and motives by characterising them as false hermits, who had entered their orders for worldly motives, and whose claims were hypocritical.³² Nigel Longchamps's *Speculum Stultorum* is well known.³³ Payen Bolotin, a Chartrain Canon, wrote *De Falsis Heremitis*, a Latin poem

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of 338 lines, against the newer orders in the early twelfth century.³⁴ Payen Bolotin portrayed the new monks as vagrants in cities who falsely claimed to lead austere and retiring lives.³⁵ Close in character is Epistle 192 by Ivo of Chartres (d.1116), addressed to the Benedictine monks of Coulomb. Ivo of Chartres attacked those sarabaites and gyrovagues who, in contrast with the anchorites of the desert, were vagabonds in cities, proudly parading their poverty.³⁶ It has been suggested that William used the tradition as the source of a symbol of the friars' superfluity, using gyrovague wandering as an image of their being outsiders, on the fringes of the church and the cosmos.³⁷ However, the traditional meaning of the satire served the purpose of satirising the friars' claims to pastoral care just as well, for William found in the antimonastic tradition a satire appropriate to his theoretical objections to the friars' profession. Since William of St Amour based his defence of the exclusive role of the secular clergy on the premise that friars belonged to the status of monks, who had no right to the powers of the priesthood which had been bequeathed to the secular clergy alone, it was appropriate to treat the orders of friars as apostate monks, whose profession had led them to neglect the obligations and traditions of monastic life. In using false-hermit satire against the friars, William of St Amour was able to insist that they were monks with no pastoral office. In putting spiritual activities before manual work the begging friars were the idle apostates from monastic rules spoken of in the ancient monastic writings.

Gyrovague satire was a tradition easily turned against begging friars. It was a satirical way of asserting the monastic theory of poverty against their mendicancy. Matthew Paris, monk of St Albans (d.1259), identified the friars with Benedict's gyrovagues in his *Chronica majora*.³⁸ In *De Periculis* and the *Collectiones* William of St Amour drew on the false-hermit tradition, using for friars the terms 'gyrovagi' from Benedict's Rule, and 'curiosi' and 'otiosi' ('interfering and idle ones') from Augustine's commentary on 1 Tim. 5:13 in *De Opere Monachorum*. Although his satire is thus comparable with that of the earlier antimonastic writers, it also has a debt to the position of the more recent monastic reformers, who had urged that a distinction should be made between clerical and monastic orders, basing their arguments on the traditional distinction defended in ancient writings such as Augustine's *De Opere Monachorum*.³⁹ The behaviour of the gyrovague provided material for the 'signs' William listed to help his readers spot pseudo-preachers: their vagrancy, as in the traditional satire, was the sign of their falseness. Such dined frequently and uninvited at the tables of others, running hither and thither, from house to house, in search of better hospitality:

Quod ad alienam mensam frequenter conueniunt non vocati.

Quod non sunt contenti oblati cibo & potu, sed querunt cibaria lautiora.

Quod cursitant de domo in domum, quaerentes hospitia meliora.⁴⁰

(They frequently assemble at a stranger's table, uninvited. They are not content with the victuals and drink they are given, but seek more luxurious fare. They run hither and thither, from house to house, in search of better hospitality.)

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Those who answered William's charge that the friars were gyrovagues included John Pecham, who replied to the charge in William's 'signs', and Thomas Aquinas, who objected to the term 'gyrovague', and quoted two of the main authorities for the charge: Paul's 'Audivimus quosdam inter vos ambulare inquiete' ('We have heard that certain ones among you go about restlessly', 2 Thess. 3:11), and Augustine's description of 'otiosi' monks 'nusquam missos, nusquam fixos, nusquam stantes, nusquam sedentes' ('sent nowhere, attached nowhere, staying nowhere, resting nowhere').⁴¹

Thus in William's writings the gyrovague tradition was adapted to accommodate the special claims of the friars. Treating them as gyrovagues reminded the friars that they were a kind of monastic order, where they claimed to be superior. Identifying these gyrovagues with the false apostles and false prophets characteristic of William's satire emphasised this point. In addition, there was a further accommodation. Using gyrovague satire for the friars was at once an attack on their profession and a pretence that their *profession* was not under attack at all. The gyrovague was one who did not adhere to the rule, therefore such satire might be claimed to endorse the profession itself. William and his contemporaries exploited this ambiguity to protect themselves. Particularly useful for this strategy was the possibility of exploiting the similarity and close association between the mendicant friars and those who adhered similarly to a life of mendicancy, but were not full members of the orders. Such 'extraregulars' were known by various names, often 'beguine', 'beghard', 'lollard' or 'lullard'. William of St Amour and Jean de Meun, for example, used these extraregulars as proxy targets for the friars themselves. Thus Faus Semblant's companion is a beguine; likewise, when defending his antimendicant polemic, William of St Amour exploited this ambiguity when he claimed that his polemic was not aimed at the recognised orders, but at those who adhered to no rule.⁴²

While William of St Amour was anxious to remind the friars that they were really a kind of monastic order, in the later fourteenth century another adaptation of the gyrovague tradition was required for an approach to the religious orders close to the Franciscan view. The gyrovague topic lost its old force for anticlerical writers who adhered neither to the monastic view of poverty nor to the traditional distinction between regular and secular clergy, but doubted the validity of the very principle of the religious rule. However, the tradition had the potential for new uses. For FitzRalph the gyrovague tradition was useful because it showed that the friars' mendicancy made them false to the gospel they professed for their rule. In the Second London Sermon he used the authority of 2 Thess. 3:11 against those 'Spontanee mendicantes' ('voluntary mendicants') who went 'de loco in locum, de villa in villam, de curia in curiam, de domo in domum' ('from place to place, from village to village, from court to court, from house to house').⁴³ Again he attacked gyrovagues in the *Defensio Curatorum*:

For now vnnepe may any grete men oper smaal, lewed or lered, take a morsel of mete, but siche beggers come vnbede . . . into houses & courtes & bep y-harberwide & etip

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& drynkep what pei *per* fyndep vnbede and vnprayed . . . Pis semeth a wonder maner lyuyng in hem *pat* seyn, *pat* pei mot holde *pe* gospel by her professioun & dop *agenus* Cristes owne sentence *pat* sente his disciples to preche *pe* gospel, & seide : 'Passe 3e nou3t from hous to hous.' Luce 10° c°. Also pei dop *agenus* anoper scripture *pat* seip: 'Voide & war *pat* pou be nou3t herberwed from hous to hous.' *Ecclesiastici* 29° c°. Bot pei gop so about from court to court & from hous to hous, for her cloystre schulde nou3t be her prison.⁴⁴

These examples show that FitzRalph took the gospel, not a private religious rule, as the authority for his attack on the gyrovagues. The new anticlericalism took this a stage further. One example is in the sermon delivered by Nicholas Hereford, Wyclif's follower, in Oxford on Ascension Day 1382. According to the notes of the sermon made by his opponents, Hereford, like FitzRalph, described the begging of friars as apostasy, but went further and recommended that *all* members of the private religions should stay in their cloisters and observe evangelical poverty:

Et hic simul copulauit religiosos omnes priuatos tam scilicet possessionatos quam etiam mendicantes, dicens quod si illi remanerent domi in claustris et viuerent ut deberent tunc pax et tranquillitas regni potissime staret per eos.⁴⁵

(At this point he associated all private religious, possessioners as well as mendicants even, saying that if they would stay at home in their cloisters and live as they ought, then peace and tranquillity throughout the realm would be attributable to them.)

A very extreme example is to be found in *Upland's Rejoinder*, a Wycliffite poem probably written rather later than Nicholas's sermon, where becoming a friar is treated as apostasy from the 'trwe reule' in the case of one who was formerly 'a plowman lyuyng trwe lyf':

Ȝee, pow3 he were a plowman lyuyng trwe lyf,
Ȝe robbe hym fro *pe* trwe reule & maken hym apostata,
A begger & a sodomit, for suche pai ben many.⁴⁶

Adherence to a more traditional notion of observance of the private rule is associated with the defence of the orders. Those who wished to defend the orders were obliged to insist on the traditional classification of kinds of monk, while their opponents insisted on new principles of classification. For example, in the Vatican manuscript of the Monk of Bury's Treatise descriptions of the traditional genera of monks have been appended to the other apologetic material, based on the ancient authorities, such as Jerome, Cassian and Augustine.⁴⁷ In *De Substantialibus Regule Monachalis*, the defence of monastic life by Uthred of Boldon which was probably written in response to Wyclif's attack, the authority of the traditional classification for contemporary orders is insisted upon in a way which reveals the extent of the threat. Here Uthred found it necessary to distinguish monks not merely from hermits, sarabaites and gyrovagues, but also from all other professions, and from seculars. Such a measure had become necessary when the very notion of the religious rule itself was under attack. Uthred based his classification on the four genera of the first chapter of Benedict's Rule, distinguishing monks

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from gyrovagues by their stability, and from sarabaits by their way of life, but added that obedience to the Benedictine Rule distinguished his order not merely from hermits, but from other religious and seculars:

Nunc autem nostra religio monachalis per mentis stabilitatem distinguitur formaliter et directe a girouagis; per morum conuersacionis a sarabaccis; per obedienciam secundum regulam beati Benedicti distinguitur a secularibus; atque omnibus aliter professis et aliquid ab heremitis.⁴⁸

(Our monastic religion is distinguished formally and directly by stability of disposition from gyrovagues, by way of life from sarabaits, from seculars by obedience to St Benedict's Rule, and is different from all other professions and in another way from hermits.)

The friars too were forced to insist on the traditional classification. It was the distinction between the regular and the extraregular which the friars continued to emphasise when defending their mendicancy. When William of St Amour treated the mendicant orders as gyrovagues and 'otiosi', Bonaventure replied that Augustine's treatment of false hermits did not apply to all those who adopted voluntary poverty, but simply to the evil ones.⁴⁹ Late in the following century, replying to the attack by the Wycliffite John Ashwardby, Richard Maidstone used the same strategy. He too insisted that what Augustine had written about idlers in *De Opere Monachorum* did not apply to all members of the contemporary mendicant orders, but to those 'monachos otiosos' to be found in every age.⁵⁰ Jordan of Saxony preceded his defence of the Augustinian profession with a chapter on the four kinds of monk, using the traditional sources, especially Cassian. Later in the work he insisted on distinguishing the friars as 'proprie dicuntur esse in statu Religionis' ('correctly termed religious') from those who were obliged to work manually; the extraregulars, 'qui nullam Religionis Regulam profitentur' ('who profess no religious rule') of nowadays were not *friars* but 'Beghardi vel Lullardi et consimiles' ('Beghards or Lullards and the like').⁵¹ The extraregulars of these kinds had continued to be an issue in continental polemic, long after antifraternal writers such as William of St Amour and Jean de Meun attacked them. Action taken by John XXII against the radical Franciscans, and against their lay followers in Provence, was particularly important. Historians have sometimes termed these extraregulars 'Beguins'. John's action was later turned against other extraregular communities in the north, which were known by a similar name. The northern extraregulars have sometimes been distinguished by modern historians as 'beguines'.⁵² Studies of ecclesiastical legislation on the extraregulars show that here confusion and uncertainty over the status and nomenclature of the various kinds of extraregular was sometimes resolved in terms of a distinction between those who were guilty of vagrant mendicancy, and should be condemned, and those who, although poor, worked manually, and should be protected.⁵³ The condemned mendicants were associated with the heresy of the Free Spirit, a pantheistic heresy associated with moral and sexual freedom.⁵⁴ Condemnations of such mendicants and heretics were traditionally associated

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with exemption for those pious extraregulars who worked and entertained no heresy.⁵⁵ The beguine communities of the Low Countries were often the subjects of such exemptions. These beguines, it was noted, were women who lived in semireligious communities, supporting themselves and doing charitable works on earnings from spinning and weaving and other manual labour associated with the textile industry of the region.⁵⁶ In 1374 and 1377 the practice of distinguishing between the different kinds of beguine on the basis of mendicancy was extended by Gregory XI to all the kinds of extraregular in Germany, Brabant and Flanders who espoused poverty ('personae pauperes utriusque sexus': 'poor persons of both sexes').⁵⁷

These traditions of adaptation of the gyrovague satire provided a satirical form for that anticlerical language and analysis of poverty already developed in the B-text of *Piers Plowman*, and a way of pressing the implications of that analysis further. The gyrovague tradition was, as has already been said, from its beginnings a satire based on classification. Continental developments of that tradition against the friars had already shown the potential of the gyrovague for associating the mendicant religious with extraregular mendicants, and contrasting them with the true poor. It is not clear that there were ever communities of semireligious associated with the friars in England, in the way that such communities had arisen on the continent. The *Piers Plowman* satire on lollers and 'lewed' ('lay', i.e. extraregular) hermits instead takes as its target anyone living a life of mendicancy who could work, with implications for anyone else who likewise defrauded the true poor. It was therefore a satire well suited to an anticlericalism which had found broadly anticlerical uses for antimendicant language.

If extraregulars in the continental tradition were not available as targets for the English satirist, then there were others who would do just as well. Gyrovague satire gave form to that link between religious mendicants and lay idlers already present in the B-text analysis of poverty. Thus the terms in which the Cornhill loller is interrogated recall the provisions of the civil law on vagrancy, as in the case of the use of civil law vocabulary like 'faitour', bringing into association clerical mendicants and lay idlers. Resoun suspects that the Cornhill loller is really an idle workman, evading labour:

'Can thow seruen,' he sayde, 'or syngen in a church,
Or koke for my cokeres or to the cart piche,
Mowen or mywen or make bond to sheues,
Repe or been a rypereue and aryse erly,
Or haue an horn and be hayward and lygge peroute nyhtes
And kepe my corn in my croft fro pykares and theues?
Or shap shon or cloth, or shep and kyne kepe,
Heggen or harwen, or swyn or gees dryue,
Or eny other kynes craft pat to pe comune nedeth,
That pou betere therby pat byleue the fynden?' (C v 12-21)

Like the C ix lollers, formerly weavers, tailors and carters' boys, the Cornhill loller escapes unrewarding labour in clerical dress. The ancient charge against

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the gyrovague is thus adapted to the new anticlerical perspective. Augustine's assertion that idle monks were formerly work-shy labourers lent itself well to the new anticlerical analysis of poverty and labour. Comparable charges occur in contemporary antifraternal polemic. One example is Nicholas Hereford's alleged assertion that idle friars had been a bad influence on rebellious 'rustici'. Geoffrey Hardeby recorded and refuted a related charge in *De Vita Evangelica*, that friars did not really renounce wealth, because before joining their orders they had been poor.⁵⁸ The lollers are like work-shy labourers who transgress the Statutes of Labour. Another element in the gyrovague tradition is emphasised, to show that they are also like work-shy labourers who feign disability. Resoun asks the Cornhill loller if he can claim exemption from labour on grounds of infirmity:

'... Or thow art broke, so may be, in body or in membre
Or ymaymed thorw som myshap, whereby thow myhte be excused?'
(C v 33-4)

The loller replies that he need not work manually because he is a cleric, not because he is a crippled layman. Thus the traditional image of the gyrovague as a feigning cripple is exploited for a satire which expresses the contemporary, anticlerical, perception of a link between false lay beggars and clerical beggars. The gyrovague tradition gives satirical expression to the link made in the B-text between religious idlers and the able-bodied lay malingerers like the wasters who laid their legs 'aliri', falsely claiming that they could not work. Furthermore, the gyrovague tradition gives form to the contrast between such lollers and the true poor; indeed, the C ix interpolation replaces and expands the B-text passage on discrimination in charity. The continental development of a way of distinguishing communities of extraregulars from one another provides an analogue for the way the deserving poor are treated here. The B-text analysis of poverty emphasised the claims of those unable to work, but here the claims of the labouring poor are emphasised too:

Woet no man, as y wene, who is worthy to haue;
Ac pat most neden aren oure neyhebores, and we nyme gode hede,
As prisoners in puttes and pore folk in cotes,
Charged with childrene and chief lordes rente;
Pat they with spynnyng may spare, spenen hit on hous-huyre,
Bothe in mylke and in mele, to make with papelotes
To aglotye with here gurles that greden aftur fode.
And hemsulue also soffre mucche hunger,
And wo in wynter-tymes, and wakyng on nyhtes
To rise to pe reule to rokke pe cradel,
Bothe to carde and to kembe, to cloute and to wasche,
And to rybbe and to rele, rusches to pylie,
That reuthe is to rede or in ryme shewe
The wo of this wommen pat wonyeth in cotes... (C ix 70-83)

As in the continental tradition, here it is manual labour which distinguishes the true poor from the gyrovague, and the analogue is particularly striking

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because the description of the true poor is based on the activities of women in the textile industry, who are said to card, comb and wash wool. By contrast, the wasters in the B-text, reluctant to help Piers with his work on the land (and by implication their opposites, the true poor who are not wasters), are visualised as agricultural labourers.

The loller satire is an anticlerical exploitation of the gyrovaguer satire, for all its debt to recent antifraternel adaptations of the tradition. Whether turned against delinquent monks, or adapted for friars, gyrovaguer satire traditionally classified on the basis of adherence to the private religious rule. Previously, gyrovaguer satire had classified kinds of monk. Here, anticlerically, it classifies the poor. Gyrovaguer satire had been based on the authority of the private religious rule. The loller satire is based on the biblical law of charity. Here, anticlerically, biblical law replaces the authority of the private religious rule. It is true that William of St Amour and others who attacked the gyrovagues were using this as a cover for attacking all members of mendicant orders – in other words, the very profession itself – but this attack on specific rules and orders was not an attack on the very authority of the private rule. William satirised the apostolic claims of the friars to show that they were gyrovaguer monks. This should be distinguished from the *Piers Plowman* satire, where the authority is that which underpinned all aspects of the new anticlericalism: the law of charity. Gyrovagues were apostates from a religious rule, but lollers offend against biblical law.

The C ix interpolation converts the traditional classification of monks into a 'classification of beggars'. The true poor ('pat most neden aren oure neyhebores' C ix 71) are not lollers; to such alms should be given. If lollers are those who transgress the law of charity, true hermits are those who observe it. Those hermits of the past who were voluntarily poor, renouncing civil dominion ('Forsoken lond and lordschipe'), were not lollers, for they did not live off alms:

And alle holy eremytes haue shal pe same.
Ac ermytes pat inhabiten by the heye weye
And in borwes among brewesteres, and beggen in churches –
Al pat holy ermytes hatede and despisede,
As rycheses and reuerences and ryche menne almesse,
Thise lollares, lache-draweres, lewede ermytes
Coueyten pe contrarye, for as coterelles they libbeth.
For hit ben but boyes, bollares at pe ale,
Noyther of lynage ne of lettrure, ne lyf-holy as ermytes
That wonede whilom in wodes with beres and lyons.
Summe hadde lyfode of his lynage and of no lyf elles
And summe lyuede by here lettrure and labour of here handes
And somme hadde foreynes to frendes pat hem fode sente
And briddes brouhte somme bred pat they by lyuede.
Althey holy ermytes were of heye kynne,
Forsoken lond and lordschipe and alle lykynges of body.

(C ix 187–202)

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The contrast between true and false hermits, traditional in gyrovague satire, is here adapted in the service of a new anticlerical classification of the poor. Here the fundamental point of reference is that of a law applicable to 'alle manere peple', the law of holy church which binds clergy and laity, and determines the deployment of civil dominion between them:

For holy church hoteth alle manere peple
Vnder obedience to be and buxum to pe lawe;
Furste, religious of religioun a reule to holde... (C IX 219-21)

Gospel law precedes and must underpin the authority of the religious rule. Again, the authority for the condemnation of false hermits, '*Non licet uobis legem voluntati, set voluntatem coniungere legi*' (C IX 212a), is close to a phrase used in the admonition of false hermits in Benedict's Rule, but whereas the latter example upholds the authority of the rule, and defines false hermits as those who follow their own desires instead of the rule, in the *Piers Plowman* example it is not a private rule, but the law of holy church, which provides the basis for classification and judgement.⁵⁹ An especially important biblical authority for this law of charity is echoed in the line 'such coterelles and crokede men and blynde' (C IX 97). Luke 14:12-14, Christ's instructions to feast-makers, a key text in the debate about biblical law and the religious profession of poverty which had provided the secular clergy, and later the anticlericals, with a basis for the definition and characterisation of the truly needy, here underpins the new anticlerical classification of gyrovagues. Lollers are false beggars, who should be excluded from the feast, lest they deprive the true poor.

In C IX lollers are distinguished from another group of beggars whom they closely resemble: lunatics. This element in the classification of beggars is another adaptation of the gyrovague tradition which accords with the new anticlericalism. The lunatics behave like gyrovagues, raving over the countryside with no care for how they are to find a living. But the resemblance is superficial, for biblical law distinguishes them from the lollers. The behaviour of the lunatics is comparable with that of the apostles, and is to be contrasted with the lollers' gyrovague wandering: 'Hit aren as his postles, suche peple, or as his priue disciples' (C IX 118). Here, authorities for evangelical poverty are used to characterise the lives of the lunatics. Just as Christ, according to the gospel, sent forth the apostles in poverty '*sine pane et pera*' (C IX 120a), without money, purse, shoes or a second coat, so God has allowed the lunatics to live without any provision for food or shelter. Just as Peter and Paul wandered widely in poverty, so these lunatics rave over the countryside, careless of personal discomfort, and just as the apostles were told '*Neminem salutaueritis per viam*' (C IX 123a) so lunatics show no respect for social station.⁶⁰ The lunatics are members of the class of the infirm poor whose behaviour is very like that of the gyrovague lollers. But biblical law provides the authority for distinguishing them. The lunatics are the true poor, comparable with the apostles. The lollers, by implication, are the false

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apostles. One image which is particularly important for establishing the contrast between the lollers and the lunatics is that of begging with a bag.⁶¹ The lunatics have no bags ('they bereth none bagges ne boteles vnder clokes') (C ix 139), while the lollers are bag-beggars. In polemical writings, texts where Christ is said to have sent the apostles forth without purse or bag were authorities for evangelical poverty. (Judas, it was remembered, was the only bag-carrying apostle.) For example, Bonaventure had interpreted the injunction against bag-carrying ('*Nolite portare sacculum neque peram*', Luke 10:4) as a precept against anxiety for temporal things, and thus as an authority for voluntarily relying on alms for survival.⁶² Other texts which proved the use of a money-bag by Christ and the apostles were used to support the argument for clerical possession.⁶³ The collocation 'bag-beggar' therefore implies illicit mendicancy: begging with the future in mind, a kind of possession.⁶⁴ With this adaptation of the gyrovague tradition – the contrast between lunatics and true lollers – the difficult problem of anxiety for the future and manual labour is approached in a new way. It will be remembered that in the B-text the '*ne solliciti sitis*' ideal, and precepts for manual labour, fitted uneasily into the poverty polemic. Here, as in the Rechelesnesse interpolation later in the C-text, the ideal of lack of solicitude becomes an anticlerical weapon, when it is successfully dissociated from religious idleness and 'professional' begging.

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... on this wyse y begge
Withoute bagge or botel but my wombe one. (C v 51–2)

The Cornhill loller claims that *he* is no bag-beggar. Yet, to Resoun he seems to be 'an ydel man' (C v 27), who lives a 'lollarne lyf' (C v 31), when he should be at work. To Consience he seems to be a gyrovague, a beggar who claims to live a life of perfection, but is neither a hermit, nor a regular who lives under the obedience of any religious community:

'... it semeth no sad parfitnesse in citees to begge,
But he be obediencer to prior or to mynistre.' (C v 90–1)

Moreover, everything the Cornhill loller says about his life links him with the gyrovagues.

True, the Cornhill loller is no idle lay beggar, no absconded lay workman transgressing the Statutes of Labour, for he is a cleric. He has had a cleric's education, and has learned a cleric's craft:

'When y 3ong was, many 3er hennes,
My fader and my frendes foende me to scole,
Tyl y wyste witterly what holy writ menede
And what is beste for the body, as the boek telleth,
And sykerost for pe soule, by so y wol contenne.

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And foend y nere, in fayth, seth my frendes deyede,
Lyf pat me lykede but in this longe clothes.
And yf y be labour sholde lyuen and lyflode deseruen,
That laboure pat y lerned beste perwith lyuen y sholde.

In eadem vocacione in qua vocati estis.

And so y leue yn London and opelond bothe;
The lomes pat y labore with and lyflode deserue
Is *pater-noster* and my prymer, *placebo* and *dirige*,
And my sauter som tyme and my seuene psalmes ...'

(C v 35-47)

Nor is he a member of any religious order; as Consience notes, he is no 'obediencer' (C v 91). He has not vowed a life of beggary as religious mendicants have. But these distinctions between the Cornhill loller and other lollers count for nothing. Despite his attempt to defend his life, he is at last forced to yield to the verdict of Resoun and Consience:

'That is soth,' y saide, 'and so y beknowe
That y haue ytynt tyme and tyme mysperened ...'

(C v 92-3)

It was not merely lay idlers and malingerers who were considered comparable with the religious gyrovagues. From the anticlerical point of view, the category of loller included clerics of other kinds who transgressed the law of charity. The new anticlericalism classified the Cornhill loller with the other lollers. Refounded on anticlerical principles, the new gyrovague satire was no longer simply a satire against members of religious orders. If biblical law was the 'rule' for all clerics, then any cleric who offended against that law might be satirised as a gyrovague, and gyrovague satire, whatever its immediate target, had implications for all clerics. In the new anticlerical satire, new clerical candidates presented themselves to take the place of the extraregulars (lay hermits) who shadowed the friars in the continental satire.

In *Piers Plowman* the gyrovague tradition is exploited as a way of satirising mendicant religious, and by implication, all those who similarly defraud the true poor. Among these, from the anticlerical point of view, were included other kinds of cleric, besides the members of the mendicant orders. The broader implications of the new satire are reflected in the studied casualness surrounding the precise vocation of the C ix lollers, but it is in C v especially that the broadly anticlerical implications of the satire are developed. Here the primary target is those clerics who could be seen as the friars' new 'extraregular' shadows: the unbeneficed secular clergy. The Cornhill loller is quite clearly an unbeneficed secular cleric. He has had a cleric's education, yet does not have cure of souls, nor is he a member of a religious order. His defence is based on the claim that there is a distinction to be made between the unbeneficed secular cleric and true 'lollares' and 'lewede ermytes' (C v 4). The satire rests on the erosion of this distinction, and is expressed through emphasis on the similarity between the behaviour of the cleric and that of other voluntary mendicants, lay and religious. Thus the old gyrovague satire, which formerly aimed at the religious through his gyrovague counterpart, or at the friar and his extraregular shadow, calling into question the distinction

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between the two, is exploited here for its new, anticlerical, implications, against friars and secular clerics.

The Cornhill loller's defence of his life covers several different kinds of unbeneficed secular cleric, specifically those working as chantry-priests ('Somme to synge masses', C v 68), and those living a scholar's life who 'sitten and wryten, Redon and resceyuen pat resoun ouhte to spene' (C v 68–9).⁶⁵ Readers who have read carefully what the loller says about his own activities have found it difficult to find an exact office which would fit the behaviour the loller describes. The sticking point has been the way he 'does the rounds once a month', which has not seemed quite plausible even for a cleric working as a casual priest performing services for the dead, or even for the living.⁶⁶ With recognition of the debt of the satire to the tradition, however, it is clear that this behaviour both shows that he is a gyrovague and satirically stresses the link with the mendicant friars. Even the claim that he is engaged in spiritual works, saying prayers and singing psalms, links him with the gyrovague. Thus the Cornhill loller defends himself against being included in this category with the excuse that as a cleric, his vocation is spiritual, not manual, work. When interrogated about his idleness, the Cornhill loller replies that he is sticking to his clerical vocation of spiritual labour, saying prayers and singing psalms for his benefactors. Satirists had long attributed this defence to their victims. They found this strategy in Augustine's *De Opere Monachorum*, where idle monks are asked what they do instead of working. They reply that they are occupied with prayers, psalms, reading and the word of God. Augustine provided all subsequent satirists with the authority to ridicule this position; spiritual works, he comments, are no excuse for idleness:

Vacare namque orationi & psalmis, non excusat eos ab operando corporaliter; quia etiam operando possunt psallere & orare ...⁶⁷

(Indeed, to devote time to prayer and psalms does not excuse them from working physically, because they can pray and sing psalms even with working ...)

Just so, the Cornhill loller's claim that his status is different from that of other idlers is satirised. The result is satire both against those the loller distinguishes himself from, and against the idle secular cleric himself. The loller himself attacks those who lead a life committed to mendicancy as bag-beggars, but even the way he insists on a distinction between lollers, 'lewed' hermits and himself links him with the new gyrovagues.

Failure to understand this debt to tradition has led to puzzlement among readers, and a tendency to endorse the Cornhill loller's claims that his status should be distinguished from that of other lollers. Thomas Wright was, it seems, close to the mark when he concluded that this C-text interpolation (which he printed from Whitaker's edition in the notes to his edition of the B-text) was 'intended as a satire against the mendicant friars'.⁶⁸ If he thought that the Cornhill loller actually was a friar, then he had not read the passage carefully enough; later readers, however, have been excessively anxious to

support the loller in his emphasis on the distinction, while often remarking on the ironies and paradoxes of the similarity between the poet's portrayal of himself (both here and more generally in the poem) and that of the false beggars and hermits satirised throughout the poem. Indeed, it is perhaps because the poet identifies himself with the Cornhill loller that the debt to satirical tradition has not been recognised and understood. The poet's confession has usually been considered for its possible 'autobiographical' content, rather than its conventional elements. Furthermore, it may seem unlikely that the poet who satirises lollers would portray himself in this very guise. But gyrovaque satire provides other examples of this mirroring of satirist and satirised. In goliardic satire the poet who satirised false religious was often cast as a vagrant cleric.⁶⁹ Furthermore, a first-person declaration or confession by a gyrovaque was a device commonly used in antireligious satire. Such uninhibited monologues solved an inherent technical difficulty. By definition, the most evil of false religious was the one whose deceit was completely successful; the one who never allowed the wolf to be glimpsed beneath the sheep's clothing. If the deceiver could not be distinguished from the true religious, how might the satirist expose his falseness? The self-examination of the Cornhill loller, the Confession of the Archpoet, the self-congratulation of Faus Semblant, the bragging of Chaucer's Pardoner, are all versions of one traditional solution to the problem.⁷⁰ Satiric tradition provides analogues for the close link in the *Piers Plowman* satire between gyrovaque satirist and gyrovaques satirised. The new anticlericalism explains their precise identities.

The new anticlericalism brought into prominence, and into relation, the way of life followed by certain kinds of mendicant friar and secular cleric. In antifraternal satire, the traditional *penetrantes domos*, the intruders into houses, increasingly yielded place to friars who went from house to house: the limiters. Sire *Penetrans domos* himself is a 'lymytour' (B xx 346) who calls in at Unity on his rounds. Wrape confesses to influencing 'lymitours' (B v 139). In the *Canterbury Tales*, the Wife of Bath identifies the limiter as the contemporary incubus, while Friar Huberd the pilgrim and Friar John in the *Summoner's Tale* are specifically described as limiters.⁷¹ Limiters are mentioned in Wycliffite works, such as *Mum and the Sothsegger*, *Jack Upland* and *Friar Daw's Reply*.⁷² The frequency with which friars are specifically described as limiters in satire of this period might suggest that it was a term applicable to every friar. But this was not the case. The office of limiter was characteristic of, and probably new in, the fourteenth century.⁷³ The limitation system was used to administer and control begging, and the pastoral work of hearing confessions and preaching, among friars. Fundamentally, the limiter was a begging friar to whom an area for begging had been ascribed, called his limitation, which was a subdivision of that area (also called a limitation) which was assigned for the support of the whole convent. This system was administered by the friars themselves, but from the time of *Super Cathedram* (1300), it was also the framework within which the

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licensing by the bishop of friars as certain kinds of confessors and preachers took place. Sometimes limiters were licensed to preach and hear confessions in their limitation.⁷⁴ Although the system of limitation was established at least by the beginning of the century, it only became a frequent occurrence in literary references to the friars from about the middle of the century.⁷⁵ Since the limitation system had been in operation at least since the beginning of the century, and since it did not apply to all friars, its importance as a characteristic of late fourteenth-century satire and polemic cannot simply be attributable to the observation of reality, but invites explanation in terms of the changing conflict with the friars. Its growing importance reflects the influence of the new anticlerical perspective. *Penetrantes domos* satire asserted the rights of the secular clergy whose powers the intruders had usurped. Limiter satire, however, focussed on the friar at work among the laity, as an illicit landlord farming a territory; thus it asserted anticlerical interests: the rights and responsibilities of the cheated and exploited lay almsgivers, of the defrauded true lay poor and of the layman's endangered soul. In the *Summoner's Tale* it is this anticlerical interest which triumphs. Limiter John's humiliation delights because it is a lay 'cherl' who has so outrageously deflated the cleric:

The lord sat stille as he were in a traunce,
And in his herte he rolled up and down,
'How hadde this cherl ymaginacioun
To shewe swich a probleme to the frere? ...'⁷⁶

In the *Jack Upland* series, the anticlerical interest is the lay property rights over a territory illicitly claimed and farmed by the limiter: 'Whi sette 3e al pe kyngis londe to ferme to 3oure lymytouris as 3e weren lordis of alle mennes goodis'.⁷⁷

Gyrovague satire provided a form almost ready-made for satirising those who lived like the limiter. The loller satire, like the limiter satire, offered an anticlerical perspective on the old antifraternel grievances. As with the limiter, so the loller's offence against the law of charity is his voluntary mendicancy; thus here too this is the main target of the satire. The old target of the friars' pastoral care is treated as an aspect of the central issue of religious mendicancy. In limiter satires, especially Chaucer's *Summoner's Tale*, this is managed through satirising the system and methods of limitation, the meeting point of mendicancy and pastoral care. A comparable reinterpretation of the pastoral care issue occurs in the loller satires. In C ix a reference to the implications of religious mendicancy for pastoral care is reserved for the end of this interpolation, where bishops are attacked for not controlling the damage done by the wolves in the sheep-fold (an allusion most probably to the licensing of limiters as confessors and preachers). In C v the life of the Cornhill loller, the unbeneficed secular cleric, 'doing the rounds', performing spiritual services and collecting offerings, is a parody of the life of the limiter.

The loller satire of *Piers Plowman* exploits the gyrovague tradition to

satirise a link between friars and secular clergy which is stressed elsewhere. Two kinds of secular cleric were especially often drawn into the orbit of the friars. The pardoner was an unbeneficed cleric whose behaviour was often associated with that of the limiter. The basis for this comparison (although they did not mention it) is clear from the work done by Kellogg and Haselmayer on the office of pardoner.⁷⁸ The duty of a pardoner seems to have been to collect alms on behalf of a religious institution, usually a hospital, in return for 'pardons' or more precisely, eleemosynary indulgences which reduced or removed any satisfaction required from a penitent as part of the sacrament of penance. Pardoners would travel about performing this task, licensed by diocesan authority, but there is evidence that even so they, like the friars, clashed with the parish clergy.⁷⁹

Another kind of cleric who was often compared with the limiter was the unbeneficed secular priest. Such priests did not have cure of souls, but instead often spent their time celebrating masses for the souls of the dead. The duties of a chantry-priest in Essex in 1397 included saying a daily requiem mass with the *Placebo*, *Dirige* and seven penitential psalms.⁸⁰ In some cases this activity was financed by a perpetual chantry, endowed by a benefactor for himself, or for someone else such as a parent, or by a guild for a member; in other cases, commonly, the bequest or benefaction was only enough to last for a temporary period. The distinction seems to have given rise to two main classes of such priests: those permanently salaried by a perpetual endowment, and those who lived by casual work, changing from one benefactor to another frequently. In some cases it seems that the work of clerics in this second category might also have involved performing services for the living as well as the dead; Archbishop Islip of Canterbury referred, in 1362, to priests who celebrated 'annualia pro vivis et defunctis'.⁸¹

The association of these different kinds of cleric in late fourteenth-century satire and polemic is comparable with the gyrovagant satire of the loller passages. Examples of the association of limiters with pardoners are found in satirical poetry, in sermons and even in episcopal registers.⁸² FitzRalph's patron, John de Grandisson, used traditional antifraternal language to warn against pardoners, false confessors and hermits, and in an entry for 1385 in the register of his successor, Thomas de Brantingham, unauthorised confessors and pardoners are again linked.⁸³ In the *Upland* series Upland compares the trickery of the two groups: 'pai [pardoners] gon neere 3ou apostatas [friars] in gilyng of pe puple', in response to Friar Daw's defence of the charge that limiters have a personal interest in the income from their limitation; Daw says that applies to pardoners.⁸⁴ The association lies behind Chaucer's treatment of the Pardoner, for whom he reserved some of the antimendicant satire found in the confession of Faus Semblant. The study of pardoners made by Kellogg and Haselmayer shows that officially pardoners were neither beggars nor preachers. Attributing false-apostle, gyrovagant, behaviour to the Pardoner ('For I wol preche and begge

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in sondry landes'), however, points up the comparison with those other false apostles in the mendicant orders:

What, trowe ye, that whiles I may preche,
And wyne gold and silver for I teche,
That I wol lyve in poverte wilfully?
Nay, nay, I thoghte it nevere, trewely!
For I wol preche and begge in sondry landes;
I wol nat do no labour with myne handes,
Ne make baskettes, and lyve therby,
By cause I wol nat beggen ydelly.
I wol noon of the apostles countrefete ...⁸⁵

For the purposes of studying the loller satire, this association of pardoners and mendicant friars provides a close comparison. However, it is the association of mendicants with certain other unbeneficed secular clerics which provides examples most nearly comparable with the loller satire. The importance of this theme, both in the loller satire and in contemporary examples, may be attributed to the changing state of the poverty conflict. It was a reinterpretation of the secular-mendicant conflict in a version relevant to the new anticlerical thinking about poverty and the dominion of the clergy towards the end of the century.

The question of similarity between unbeneficed clerics and mendicant religious was of course an aspect of the conflict engendered and perpetuated by the differences in the ways the secular clergy and the mendicants gained their income: the clash between tithes and alms. The seculars' case against the friars' pastoral care rested on the belief that priests had a right to support in return for their services. Besides being sanctioned by apostolic teaching and example, this was prefigured by the example of the Levites in the Old Testament, who, as the priestly tribe, had no share of the promised land, but were guaranteed first-fruits and tithes. The example of the Levites was an important element in the poverty controversy. The condition of the tribe of the priesthood under the old law was used as a figure for the position of ecclesiastics. Quotations from Deuteronomy and Numbers were used to show how, among the tribes of Israel, the Levites had no share of the promised land, since God was their possession and inheritance. God had commanded that the Levites should live by receiving tithes from the people. In *De Vita Evangelica* Hardeby argued that since the old law prefigures the more perfect new law, ecclesiastics should live at least as the Levites did.⁸⁶ Uthred of Boldon gave this as an argument against endowment in *De Dotacione Ecclesie Sponse Christi*, quoting the traditional texts Num. 18:20-2 and Deut. 18:1-2.⁸⁷ The principle that no-one should be promoted to holy orders without sufficient title to livelihood was enshrined in canon law. The contrast between this and the way friars supported their pastoral work was a common argument against mendicancy.⁸⁸ Where other kinds of income were involved there was potentially a source of embarrassment to the secular clergy, therefore. One important issue was income gained by working as a

chantry-priest. This activity was frequently attacked as a source of danger to the flock. In the Prologue absentee priests who prefer to 'syngen for symonie' (B Pro 86) in London are satirised (at Z Pro 63-4 those who seek payment for 'anneles Ant take trentales thereto'). Again, in the B-text debate about poverty such receipts are condemned, and it is asserted that priests should have 'title' (B xi 290) to sufficient support. Here the annotator of Oriel 79 wrote 'Of annuelleris prestis', while the revised C-text version in Huntington Library HM 143 is marked 'Where of seruen tithes pat prestes han'.⁸⁹ Chaucer's exemplary Parson is a well-known example of one who does not neglect his flock in order to supplement a meagre living by seeking a chantry in London.⁹⁰ This praise is covert blame for all who do.

During the decades of the first and subsequent outbreaks of bubonic plague, the unbeneficed secular clergy began to attract considerable political attention, and disapproval. The numbers of such priests swelled considerably during this period. High mortality rates had increased demand for priests' services for the dead, and had led to a shortage of priests to perform such tasks. Unbeneficed secular clerics were mobile, since they had no cure of souls, and could offer temporary services; thus it was this group whose numbers increased to meet the demand.⁹¹ The shortage of priests was a clerical parallel to the shortage of manual labourers among the laity, and attracted parallel responses.⁹² The Ordinance of Labourers of 1349 was directed at controlling wage-inflation and vagrancy among lay workers, but concluded with a paragraph which tackled the clerical equivalent of this problem. It noted that chaplains were demanding excessive wages for their services, and instructed bishops to compel them to accept the customary rates. The ecclesiastical authorities soon issued their own directions. Islip, Archbishop of Canterbury, issued *Effrenata* in 1350, deploring the abuse and setting out penalties.⁹³ Just as the legislation for lay workers had been an attempt to check the workers' labour market, so Islip's proposals were an equivalent for clerics. As well as setting maximum wages, he made acceptance of an offer of cure of souls compulsory, to counter a preference among chaplains for the more lucrative celebration of annuals. *Effrenata* was issued again in 1362. To tackle the problem of clerical vagrancy, in the form of migration to locations offering lucrative employment, priests were forbidden to leave their dioceses without the bishop's permission.⁹⁴ Archbishop Sudbury issued *Effrenata* for a third time in 1378.

This legislation implied a parallel between unbeneficed secular clerics and landless lay labourers, as the anticlericals found a parallel between lay labourers and propertyless friars. Just as, allegedly, Hereford accused the friars of being a bad example to 'rustici', so Islip complained that unbeneficed secular priests were a pernicious example to the laity.⁹⁵ These gyrovagues were attracted to cities, just as the friars were thought to be; Islip complained in 1352 that there was an especially large number of runaway clergy in the diocese of London.⁹⁶ And just as the friars' mendicancy became an anticlerical issue, so the behaviour of unbeneficed secular clerics, and

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measures against them, acquired implications for the anticlericals. Debate over the issue in the 1370s shows what these implications were. In 1376 the Commons petitioned that the king's judges should be empowered to punish offenders against clerical wage legislation, both the clerical recipients, and the lay donors, of excessive payments. The basis for their claim was the assertion that unbeneficed priests were employed under a lay contract, therefore their employment came under the jurisdiction of the king's courts:

... suppliant les dites Communes ... que les Prestres qui preignent trop outrageouse lower, & ceux qui leur doignent trop outrageouse lower, que l'un & l'autre soient chastiez par voz Justices. Car il est lay contract, & en vostre Court attient d'estre justisie & redresse, & nemye allours.⁹⁷

The implications are clear from a case heard in the same year in the court of common pleas. This case turned on whether the Ordinance of Labourers, notwithstanding that it was aimed at lay manual labourers, applied to clerics. One side argued that the Ordinance applied only to lay labourers and artisans, the opposition that chaplains should be considered labourers, despite their clerical status.⁹⁸ The Cornhill loller makes this special clerical status the basis of his claim for exemption from manual labour when he quotes '*Dominus pars hereditatis mee*' (C v 60a), a text associated with the 'benefit of clergy' or special legal status clerics claimed.⁹⁹ But his attempt to distinguish himself from lay vagrants is no more convincing to Resoun and Consience than his attempt to distinguish himself from clerical 'professional' beggars.

Examples of the satirical association of unbeneficed secular clerics with mendicant friars provide a contemporary context for the themes and procedures of the loller satire. The association between unbeneficed secular clerics and mendicant friars elsewhere is made in various ways and is used for a variety of purposes. When the association is used anticlerically, the new satire transforms the old secular-mendicant conflict. Here the claims of the secular clergy fall victim to their own antifraternel arguments, and the old conflict between the two groups is itself an object of satire. The transformation may be illustrated through a contrast with a much earlier anti-fraternel text. The Cornhill loller's objections to bag-beggars are like the complaints made by the London rectors who in 1309 objected to friars' acting as annual priests and thereby depriving poor secular clerics.¹⁰⁰ Such claims in the Cornhill interpolation are an object of satire. Here and in other similar texts they are a vehicle for satire against the conflict itself. Annual priests, pardoners and others who offer intercession for souls as a living are just as culpable as the limiters. They all obtain alms under false pretences in exchange for spiritual services of doubtful value. The object of the attack is the 'professional' cleric, whose pastoral work commits him to a life of mendicancy.

In the B-text attack on such priests, the comparison is implied by the use of the language of ill-gotten gains more usually associated with friars' begging;

here receiving money for services is like taking 'mete of vsureres' (B XI 284). In his *quaestio* against the mendicant friars, Uthred of Boldon similarly attacked begging among secular clerics, who, he claimed, should labour manually if their living was insufficient.¹⁰¹ The limiter system had given rise to another, and increasingly important, basis for the old charge that friars were not true beggars because they had no immediate and personal need. Since the work of the limiter was specialised, not performed by every member of a convent, but only by those appointed to beg on behalf of all, in a variation on the old charge it was asserted that the limiter therefore had a personal interest in his limitation, paying over some income to the convent, and keeping the rest. Chaucer's Friar Huberd was satirised for this in the *General Prologue* ('His purchas was wel bettre than his rente').¹⁰² A similar charge was often made against mendicant friars on the basis of a comparison with chantry or annual priests. Friar Daw claims that there is a contrast: 'frely graunte we our masse to hem Pat freely zeuen vs her almesse', by contrast with those parsons 'pat setten her chirches to ferme', and 'al pese annuellers'.¹⁰³ But the fact that performing annuals gave an assured income (presumably in cases where the benefaction was more substantial than that received by casual mass-priests) underlay attacks on mendicant friars themselves for performing such duties. Like the limitation system, it was treated as incompatible with mendicancy. In the English satirical poem 'Preste, ne Monke, ne 3it Chanoun', limiters are attacked as those who 'selle per song', illicitly competing with secular annual priests:

Pam felle to lyue al on purchase,
Of almes geten fro place to place;
& for all pat pam holpen has,
shuld pai pray & syng.
Bot now pis londe so negh soght is,
Pat vnnep may prestes seculars
Gete any seruice for pes frers –
Pat is a wondre ping.
Pis is a quaint custome
ordeyned ham among,
Pat frers shal annuel prestes bycome,
& so-gates selle per song.¹⁰⁴

The closeness to the Cornhill loller's language is striking: 'This y segge ["Thus ich synge" – Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, C VI 48] for here soules of suche as me helpeth ...' (C V 48). Personal profit from annuals is the basis for anti-fraternal uses of the topic in *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*, and in *Jack Upland*.¹⁰⁵ Another striking comparison with the satire of the Cornhill loller on this subject is to be found in Hereford's Ascension Day sermon, where Hereford claimed that limiters were apostates and malingerers because they made a personal profit out of begging, and that friars who performed annuals were apostates, again because they made a personal profit:

... cum eorum limitatores satis mendicauerint pro sua communitate, statim mendicant iterum pro se ipsis; et sic falsi prauim monstrant se esse apostatas, et frangunt regulam et

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votum quo professi sunt nihil habere in proprio. Et ille qui est sacerdos inter eos . . . se monstrat apostatam quia recipiendo vnum annuale specialiter pro se ipso, transgreditur suum votum . . .¹⁰⁶

(. . . when their limiters have begged enough for their community, immediately they beg again for themselves, and thus the false crooked ones show themselves to be apostates, and break the rule and vow by which they have professed to have nothing of their own. And anyone among them who is a priest . . . shows himself an apostate because, by receiving an annual especially for himself, he transgresses his vow . . .)

One of the ways in which friars were linked with their gyrovague counterparts is of special importance in the *Piers Plowman* satire. This is the image of the professional entertainer. The continental word 'lullard' or 'lollard' was related to 'lullen', a Middle Dutch verb with cognates in many other Germanic languages, which meant, among other things, 'to hum' or 'to sing'. When 'lollard' was borrowed by writers in England it is possible that they knew this meaning; 'lullen' was, after all, cognate with Middle English 'lullen' (*MED*: 'to induce sleep in', 'to beguile'; senses appropriate for the cry to bishops 'Vigilare' (C IX 258) at the end of the C IX interpolation).¹⁰⁷ Even if this meaning was not known in England the choice of a singing gyrovague with which to compare the friars (emphasised by the variant printed by Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, C VI 48, 'Thus ich synge') can be explained as an adaptation of tradition. This image also links the Cornhill loller with the lunatic lollers of C IX, for they are described as 'minstrels':

Suche manere men, Matheu vs techeth,
We sholde haue hem to house and helpe hem when they come.
Et egenos vagosque induc in domum tuam.
For hit aren merye-mouthed men, munstrals of heuene,
And godes boyes, bourdyors, as the book telleth.
Si quis videtur sapiens, fiet stultus vt sit sapiens. (C IX 124-7a)

When friars were compared with annual priests on the basis of 'selling their song', this was an adaptation of an image formerly used to link friars with the undeserving poor. Minstrels provided another category, like the friars, of itinerants who relied on alms. It was usual to complain that the rich gave to dishonest entertainers, and neglected the poor. Tags from the familiar precepts are quoted in passus VII of the C-text: '*Qui histrionibus dat, demonibus sacrificat*' (Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, C VIII 119a) and in some manuscripts '*Dare histrionibus*' (C VII 119a). An important source for these precepts was Augustine's commentary on Psalm 102, quoted in Gratian.¹⁰⁸ When minstrel imagery in *Piers Plowman* – and in other antifraternal satire – has been discussed it has often been noted that the phrase 'joculatores Dei' ('God's minstrels') was applied to the early followers of St Francis.¹⁰⁹ However, the possible relevance for this explanation of the imagery of the common use of minstrels as an example of undeserving beggars has not been recognised. There is evidence that the friars' claims to be God's minstrels was a response to, or perhaps gave rise to, satirical comparisons between friars and

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the 'dishonest profession' of minstrelsy. For example, it has been noted that Jean de Meun's contemporary, the antifraternat satirist Rutebeuf, treated the friars as rivals to the 'jongleurs'.¹¹⁰ There may be a hint of the topic in Chaucer's portrait of friar Huberd:

And certainly he hadde a murye note;
Wel koude he synge and pleyen on a rote;
Of yeddynges he baar outrely the pris.¹¹¹

Thomas Doking, a thirteenth-century Franciscan, may have had this charge in mind when he distinguished between bad minstrels, who should be rejected, and good minstrels 'tanquam pauperes Christi' ('like Christ's poor') in a commentary on Gal. 6.¹¹² Something of this comparison between minstrels and friars may lie behind FitzRalph's unusual prohibition of *joculatores* for the laity, while friars are clearly compared with minstrels in *Jack Upland*:

3e winnen more wip *In principio* pan Crist & hise apostlis & alle pe seintis of heuene;
& in pis mynistrallis ben bettere panne 3e, for pei contrarien not her myrpis as 3e
don.¹¹³

It was a simple matter therefore to extend the image to the secular cleric too, to show how in his case too pastoral work was a 'dishonest profession'.

In C ix the lunatic lollers are distinguished from true lollers in the language of minstrelsy. Here earthly minstrels are compared with 'minstrels of heaven'. The rich should give the lunatics alms because they are, as it were, minstrels of God: 'merye-mouthed men, munstrals of heuene, And godes boys, bourdyors':

And alle manere munstrals, me woet wel pe sothe,
To vnderfongen hem fayre byfalleth for pe ryche,
For pe lordes loue or pe ladyes pat they with longen.
Me suffreth al pat suche sayen and in solace taketh,
And 3ut more to suche men me doth ar they passe;
Men gyueth hem giftes and golde for grete lordes sake.
Ryht so, 3e ryche, 3ut rather 3e sholde
Welcomen and worschipe and with 3oure goed helpen
Godes munstrals and his mesagers and his mery bordiours,
The whiche arn lunatyk loreles and lebares aboute,
For vnder godes secret seal here synnes ben keuered.
For they bereth none bagges ne boteles vnder clokes...

(C ix 128-39)

The rich tolerate what minstrels say, and reward them, out of courtesy to the lord or lady of the household. All the sooner, then, should the rich receive and reward God's minstrels. Such are to be distinguished from true lollers, bag-beggars. For lunatics may utter the word of God, but through prophecy, not as professional preachers:

... moneyeles pey walke,
With a good will, witteles, mony wyde contreyes,

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Riht as Peter dede and Poul, saue pat pey preche nat
Ne none muracles maken – ac many tymes hem happeth
To profecye of pe peple, pleyinge, as hit were. (C IX 110–14)

Thus these lunatic lollers, whose behaviour happens to echo the apostolic pattern ('Riht as Peter dede and Poul') are to be distinguished from lollers whose claim to imitate the lives of the apostles results in a voluntary commitment to a life of pastoral care supported by mendicancy.¹¹⁴

The new satire, therefore, is associated with the development of the full anticlerical implications of antireligious traditions formerly associated with the disputes over poverty and pastoral care. The development of this satire is thus comparable with the anticlerical adaptations of other traditions, discussed in previous chapters. Here the language and analysis of the new poverty polemic are developed, and the old secular–mendicant controversy is reinterpreted in a new way. Those who go from house to house, rather than those who penetrate houses, are the new object of the satire. In this new satire the wolves in sheep's clothing merge with the wolves in the sheep-fold, and the pastoral care question is approached afresh. It is a satire based on the authority of the new anticlericalism, biblical law, and as such it offered a satire appropriate to the new account of the dominion of the clergy. The gyrovague tradition, freed from its dependence on the authority of the religious rule, offered a metaphor appropriate for all those clerics who offended against biblical law, a new anticlerical satire.

'KYNDELICHE, BY CRIST, BEN SUCHE YCALD "LOLLARES"': THE NEW SATIRE UNDER SIEGE

Thus y awakede, woet god, whan y wonede in Cornehull,
Kytte and y in a cote, yclothed as a lollare,
And lytel ylet by, leueth me for sothe,
Amonges lollares of Londone and lewede ermytes,
For y made of tho men as resoun me tauhte. (C v 1–5)

The narrative of the poet's self-examination, which tells how he recognised that he too was a loller, is prefaced by this reference to his poetry against lollers and 'lewede ermytes'. Resoun, he says, had guided this satire, as Resoun was to guide his own self-examination. Before encountering Resoun's disapproval, he was held in low esteem among others. But in this case, it was the victims of his satire, the 'lollares of Londone and lewede ermytes' who disapproved of him. His satire against them had attracted their disapproval: 'For y made of tho men as resoun me tauhte'. He had attacked them as Resoun was about to attack him. Whether this reference to a clash over the loller satire was anything other than a fictional pretext for the new passage in C v could probably never be established for certain. But there is plenty of evidence, textual and contextual, that the satire was part of a conflict over the authority of the religious orders, and over the identity of 'lollers'.

The new anticlerical satire in *Piers Plowman*, the Cornhill loller satire and

the 'classification of beggars', has been received as interpolations in C v and C ix. But not all the manuscripts share this arrangement of the classification of beggars. In the 'Ilchester' manuscript of the C-text, London University Library S.L.v.88, the classification of beggars has been incorporated into an A-text version of the Prologue, and this composite, together with some further C-text material, serves in place of the familiar C-text Prologue. In Huntington Library HM 114, a 'mixed-text', highly aberrant manuscript, the classification of beggars has been interpolated into the ploughing sequence on wasters. It is not simply these unusual contexts for the classification of beggars which make these manuscripts significant for the early history of the new satire. Taken together, and collated with the 'received' C-text, these manuscripts are witnesses to a second textual tradition of the classification of beggars.¹¹⁵ This important evidence suggests that this part of the loller satire circulated in an uninterpolated form during an early period of the poem's history. What may be deduced about its text points to draft, unfinished poetry, not yet revised for incorporation into *Piers Plowman*. These indications of earliness are corroborated by the evidence of manuscript dating. The Ilchester manuscript, dated in the last decade of the fourteenth century, includes this version of the classification of beggars in an 'improved' state, smoothed metrically, and interpolated into A-text Prologue material, which has in turn been married with a C-text, where the classification of beggars is repeated in its received form in C ix.¹¹⁶ This requires an early date for the circulation of the uninterpolated material, in order to allow time for the various stages of improvement and interpolation which must have preceded the Ilchester arrangement. That is to say, it points to a date close to the time the C-text is usually thought to have been composed, in the 1380s.

It is tempting to speculate that it was early circulation of this text of the classification of beggars which prompted the clash over his loller satire to which the poet refers in the opening lines of C v. We know of no other loller satire by this poet which would fit the description given here. Such a conflict could have led to the further development of the satire which follows in C v, also to the revision of the classification of beggars and its interpolation into C ix. Whether or not the reference in C v is to an early controversy over a version of the classification of beggars which resulted from objections made by those identified there as lollers, it is demonstrable that the question of the identity of 'lollers' was an issue of contemporary debate between members of the religious orders and their opponents.

Traditionally, it has been held that 'loller', meaning 'idler', was an established word in Middle English. The word 'lollard', denoting a follower of Wyclif's heresy, has been held to be a borrowing of the continental word 'lollard' or 'lullard', which denoted a religious sect so called because of their habit of muttering prayers. It has been thought that when 'lollard' was introduced, it was confused with 'loller'.¹¹⁷ There are three main reasons why this account of 'loller' is untenable. First, there is no evidence that 'loller' ever appeared in Middle English before the *Piers Plowman* examples.¹¹⁸ The

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Middle English Dictionary gives no earlier examples. The view that 'loller' was an old word seems to be based on a misreading of the account of the word given in the poem:

Kyndeliche, by Crist, ben suche ycald 'lollares',
As by þe Engelisch of oure eldres, of olde mennes techynge.
He pat lolleth is lame or his leg out of ioynthe
Or ymaymed in som membre, for to meschief hit souneth.
Rihte so sothly such manere ermytes
Lollen aȝen þe byleue and þe lawe of holy church. (C IX 213-18)

The misreading is encouraged by the traditional editorial punctuation of this passage. If the stop after 'souneth' is deleted and 'As by ...' is correlated with 'Rihte so ...' then only the verb 'lollen', meaning to hang or slump lamely, is claimed to be an old word. The use of the noun 'loller' is justified in relation to this old verb, but is almost certainly itself not claimed to be old, or etymologically linked with this verb. Indeed, if everyone already felt that 'lollen' and 'loller' were related, the passage would be otiose. Second, there is no need to seek a native origin, for the continental term 'lollard' itself denoted a gyrovague, or extraregular. Third, confusion over nomenclature was already part of the continental attack on extraregulars. The difficulty modern historians have resolved by distinguishing 'Beguins' from 'beguines' arises from the medieval ambiguity of the word. Confusion over nomenclature was very likely deliberately exploited by polemicists. The terms 'beguine', 'beghard', 'lollard' and 'lullard' were applied both to heretical mendicants and to those who would distinguish themselves as pious, orthodox, hard-working semireligious.¹¹⁹ All the evidence therefore suggests that 'loller' and 'lollard' were both borrowings of the same word.

In *Piers Plowman* the word 'loller' is used to denote the gyrovagues of the late fourteenth-century church in England. The choice of this word was appropriate to the tradition of naming this genus in antireligious satire. Traditionally, the name of a genus evoked its essential characteristic. This meaning was sometimes obvious, as in the case of 'gyrovagus' in the Master's Rule and Benedict's Rule, for the hermit who wanders about.¹²⁰ The names 'monachi mundmenses' ('world-measuring monks') and 'monachi nulli locenses' ('monks of no fixed address') were also proposed, as terms which evoke the essential instability of the genus, in contrast to the true monk who stayed in the cloister.¹²¹ Commenting on 'sarabaitae', which has no obvious etymology, Cassian explained that the name was Coptic, thus it signified the separateness which defined this genus, for 'sarabaitae' were characterised by the way they separated themselves from monastic communities and rules.¹²² These were appropriate names for genera which were travesties of the monastic profession, suitably contrasting with the names of the holy genera, such as 'monachus' which, according to Jerome, meant 'unus tristis' ('a sombre, serious one') and one who lives apart from the crowd, and 'coenobiti', which meant 'those who have a common life'.¹²³ Similarly, the commentary given on 'loller' in *Piers Plowman* evokes the essence of the genus. It is suggested that 'loller' sounds like the old verb 'lollen', which

denotes the way a lame or maimed man carries himself. Such a word is appropriate to the essence of the false-hermit genus here, for just as the lolling of lame men is associated with evil or misfortune ('for to meschief hit souneth', C IX 216) so false hermits 'Lollen aȝen pe byleue and pe lawe of holy church' (C IX 218). False hermits are likewise associated with evil; metaphorically perhaps they are out of step with the law of holy church, or like a maimed limb, out of joint with the law. Therefore, just as 'gyrovagus' suggested the apostasy of the false hermit from a monastic rule, with the image of wandering out of the cloister, so 'loller' was appropriate as a metaphor for apostasy from the law of holy church.

The choice of the 'lolling' metaphor was not arbitrary, but associated with the late fourteenth-century debate about the identity of the gyrovagues in the contemporary church. The lives of gyrovagues and sarabaites were travesties and false imitations of the lives of true monks and hermits; just so the *Piers Plowman* lollers lead lives which are a travesty and false imitation of the lives of the involuntary poor. The word 'loller' was therefore supremely appropriate for the gyrovague who usurped the place of the crooked, the lame and the blind of Luke 14:12-14, for lollers are those who go as if lamely. There is support for this interpretation of the contemporary connotations of 'loller'. The second textual tradition of the classification of beggars has some defective alliteration in this passage. Characteristically, the Ilchester manuscript contains an 'improvement', in the shape of a unique line which expresses this interpretation of the word: 'So pise lewed lollers as lame men pey walken'.¹²⁴ The debate over Luke 14:12-14, over who had a true claim to be treated as the crooked, the lame and the blind, dominated the Maidstone-Ashwardby conflict which may have taken place as late as the 1390s, but many of the issues were raised in the early 1380s, when Nicholas Hereford and others clashed with the religious orders. Hereford almost certainly used the image of false infirmity expressed by 'loller' in its '*Piers Plowman* sense' against the friars in his Ascension Day sermon of 1382; he may well have used the word 'loller' itself. Unfortunately, although the sermon was in English, only Latin notes of it have been preserved. The notary John Fykyes recorded that Hereford had called the friars 'falsi prauī, lurdici et loselli'.¹²⁵ The image of false infirmity seems to be suggested even by 'falsi prauī', a phrase commonly used for friars in this sermon, for 'prauī' connotes both physical and moral infirmity, and thus could be translated into modern English by 'crooked ones'. The word 'loselli' is clearly a Latinised form of English 'losel'. The word 'losel' meant 'wastrel', and is found in collocation with 'loller' in some lines interpolated in C VIII:

And alle kyne crafty men pat conne lyue in treuthe
Y shal fynde hem fode pat fayfulleche libbeth,
Saue Iacke pe iogelour and Ionet of pe stuyues
And Danyel pe dees-playere and Denote pe baude
And frere faytour and folk of pat ordre,
That lollares and loseles lele men holdeth ... (C VIII 69-74)

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The collocation also occurs in a tract written by the Lollard sympathiser John Clanvowe.¹²⁶ There are two reasons for supposing that 'lurdici' represents the English 'lollers'. The choice of the alliterative phrase 'lurdici et loselli', of which one half was itself sometimes part of an English alliterative collocation, might indicate an attempt to find a Latin counterpart for an English alliterative phrase. In addition, 'lurdici' would seem to be a formation from the verb 'lordicare', which had a very precise meaning close to that claimed in *Piers Plowman* for 'lollen'. The only dictionary examples of the verb 'lordicare' are from the Master's Rule, where 'lordicat' and 'lordicando' are used to denote the way a gyrovague moves when feigning infirmity, walking with a bent back, in order to excite the sympathy of his patrons.¹²⁷ There are two examples in the description of the gyrovague in the Master's Rule; in the first case the gyrovague adopts this posture when refusing to depart from his benefactors. In the second instance the gyrovagues feign infirmity when departing after hearty refreshment at a monastery:

Caeditur, pungitur, ustulatur, lordicat miser asellus et non uadet . . . Sic prima mane calefacti mero . . . monasteria ipsa aut cellulas false exeunt lordicando de fincta infirmitate . . .¹²⁸

(Struck, pinched, burned, the wretched little ass adopts a hunched back and does not depart . . . Thus at first light, warmed up with wine . . . they depart the monastery or cells falsely, by walking bent-backed on account of feigned infirmity . . .)

Whether or not 'lurdici' was chosen to stand for the English 'loller', its use by Fykyes certainly suggests that Hereford used the loller *image* with antifraternal implications. If Nicholas Hereford did call the friars 'lollers and losels', this would be an instance comparable with the brief C-text interpolation in passus VIII, where it seems to be claimed – the syntax is ambiguous – that 'lele men' hold false mendicant religious to be 'lollares and loseles' (C VIII 74).

The terms used on the continent for the extraregulars had no immediately corresponding application in an English context, because semireligious communities such as the beguines seem not to have been associated with the religious orders in England. It was, therefore, left to polemicists to identify the gyrovagues of the church in England. In *Piers Plowman*, when 'loller' was used to name voluntary beggars, the word was a contribution to the new anticlerical vocabulary of poverty. In particular, it filled the gap left by the ambiguous and problematic word 'bidder', which, as we have seen in chapter 3, was a target for revision and avoidance in the C-text. 'Loller' was more clearly pejorative. It was not the only loan from the continental vocabulary; according to *OED* and *MED*, 'beggar' was very probably derived from 'beghard' and 'beguine'. But just as the identification of the gyrovagues of the English church with voluntary mendicants was controversial, so the *Piers Plowman* adaptation of continental 'lollard' did not remain unchallenged. It was in an English version of the continental conflict and confusion over gyrovague nomenclature that an opposing use of 'lollard' was asserted. Polemicists among the English religious orders applied the word (and some

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of the associated satire) to the Wycliffites, who appeared in many ways to justify being named after the continental heretics. The earliest recorded official use in England suggests an appreciation of the double-edged possibilities of the ambiguity in the English circumstances, when in 1382 – on 15 June, one month exactly after Hereford's 'lurdici' sermon – Henry Crumpe called the Wycliffites 'lollards':

... suspenditur Henricus Crumpe, magister in theologia, ab actibus suis, publice, in ecclesia B. Virginis; et imponunt sibi perturbationem pacis, quia vocavit haereticos 'Lollardos'.¹²⁹

(... Henry Crumpe, Master in Theology, was suspended from activities, publicly, in the Church of the Blessed Virgin, and was charged with a disturbance of the peace, because he called the heretics 'Lollards'.)

The disturbance of the peace this caused in Oxford, and the official condemnation of Crumpe, are hard to account for solely as Wycliffite outrage. More likely, the affray was caused because Crumpe, who is known to have been an enemy of the friars, had calculated to offend the mendicants too when he branded the Wycliffites with the name used on the continent for sects associated with the mendicant orders. Crumpe's use of the word 'lollardi' would have been particularly offensive to the friars, not in itself, but because it linked them with the Wycliffites. This natural, and not necessarily pejorative, association of the word 'lollardi' with the friars might also explain why, if Hereford did call the friars 'lollers' in his sermon of the same year, Fykyes – working on behalf of the Carmelite friar Peter Stokes – chose 'lurdici' to render the term in Latin rather than 'lollardi'. Bereft of the pun on 'false cripples' available in English, the point of the word as a pejorative term against *friars* was at least partly lost.¹³⁰ There are other, later, possible examples of plays on 'loller' which could owe a debt to this tradition, possibly to *Piers Plowman* itself. There may have been a continuation of a tradition of punning as in *Piers Plowman* on 'lollen' meaning 'to hang'; in *Mum and the Sothsegger* the eight Franciscan friars hanged at Tyburn in 1402 were said to 'lolle by pe necke':

The secund is a pryvy poynt I pray hit be helid:
Thay cunne not reede redelles a-right, as me penketh;
For furst folowid freres Lollardz [names],
And sith hath be shewed pe same on paym-self,
That paire lesingz haue lad paym to lolle by pe necke;
At Tibourne for traison y-twyght vp pay were.
For as hit is y-seide by eldryn dawes,
'Pe churle yafe a dome whiche came by hym aftre'.¹³¹

In a tract on biblical translation Christ on the cross was 'Pe most blessed loller pat euer was or euer schal be ... for oure synnes lollynge on pe rode tree':

I rede of tweye manere lollers in pe lawe of grace; summe lolleden to Godward and summe to pe fendward, and of bope pese maner lolliers I purpose to reherse summe.¹³²

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Both examples suggest that 'loller' long remained important territory for polemicists.

The persistence of words and phrases such as 'faitours', 'bold beggars' and 'beggars with bags' in satirical writings almost certainly written after *Piers Plowman* suggests that one of the most important contributions of the poem to late medieval English literature was in the area of anticlerical poverty vocabulary. Some of these terms may have been first established as satirical coinage in *Piers Plowman*; in other cases use in the poem no doubt influenced circulation, and contributed to the development of a satirical and polemical English vocabulary. The word 'loller', however, seems to have been one of the exceptions to this pattern. What we have described as the '*Piers Plowman* sense' of 'loller' seems only briefly to have been viable. Usage in the poem, and in contemporary and later writings, suggests that it was only possible for a short time in late fourteenth-century England to use 'loller' as a satirical term for those who were defined by the law of Christ as the gyrovagues of the contemporary church. The evidence suggests that this definition was maintained despite (and most probably because of) the growing use of the near-homonym 'lollard' for the heretics who followed the teachings of Wyclif, but that the '*Piers Plowman* sense' soon lost ground in competition with the other usage. Evidence given by marginal annotation and variant readings in the *Piers Plowman* manuscripts lends further support to this interpretation.

If the *Piers Plowman* examples of 'loller' were part of a tussle for control of the word, history of course shows that ultimately the religious won this battle, and succeeded in establishing 'lollard' as a pejorative term for the Wycliffites. Most of the evidence in the poem's manuscripts points to an early defeat for the alternative, *Piers Plowman*, 'loller'. Many of the manuscripts have variant readings instead of 'loller'. In most cases these suggest misunderstanding arising from the early loss or redundancy of the special *Piers Plowman* sense of the word. Misunderstanding is suggested by the frequent and largely patternless variation with 'lorel' which is found in most manuscripts. Most examples occur in the classification of beggars, especially in the line 'Reche 3e neuere, 3e riche, thouh suche lollares sterue' (C ix 101), where many manuscripts have 'lorels', but there are many other examples.¹³³ The word 'lorel' was of course appropriate for false hermits, but this random variation suggests that for some it had equal status with 'loller'. This is particularly evident in the two 'lunatic loller' lines ('The whiche aren lunatyk lollares and lepaes aboute', C ix 107; Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, C x 137) which, although exactly repeated in some manuscripts, in others, such as Pearsall's base manuscript, have variation with 'lorel' in one line of the pair.¹³⁴

It would be surprising if manuscripts copied during the period in which such writings were produced did not evince some variation in the 'loller' lines, but nonetheless it is very difficult to interpret the more positive variation which occurs. One example which appears to represent something more than merely misunderstanding or confusion is British Library Cotton

Vespasian B xvi where 'lorel' has been systematically substituted for 'loller'.¹³⁵ There are several possible explanations for this, including the choice of a less ambiguous term, following the failure of the *Piers Plowman* sense of 'loller' to become established, and a concern to dissociate the term from the disreputable class of false hermits; both Wycliffites and their opponents could have had motives for this. A similar, though less thorough, attempt at substitution seems to have occurred in British Library MS Royal 18 B xvii.¹³⁶ Even if textual character could be convincingly related to the interests suggested by the other contents of these manuscripts, interpretation would still be hazardous, because although both include writings related to Lollardy (*Pierce the Ploughmans Crede* in the Royal manuscript, and a poem and a satirical prose proclamation in the Cotton manuscript) the compiler of Cotton Vespasian B xvi seems to have been interested in writings with relevance for the later conflict between the Yorkists and the Lancastrians, while MS Royal 18 B xvii is sixteenth-century.¹³⁷ Variation with somewhat clearer implications occurs in the B-text line 'For he [lyuep] noȝt in lolleris ne in londleperis heremytes' (B xv 213). Here the textually related 'mixed' manuscripts Bm, Bo and Cot have 'freris' for 'lolleris', while the textually related pair O and C² have 'losels', and two of the Crowley prints have 'losels' and 'lesels'. If 'lolleris' were archetypal, these variants would suggest the rejection of an unsuitable term.

More difficult to interpret are variations in spelling between 'loller' and 'lollard'; in Douce 104 this seems random, but in British Library Additional 34779 and Cambridge University Library Ff 5 35 there may have been an attempt to distinguish the Cornhill 'loller' from the 'lollards' among whom he lives.¹³⁸ Interpretation is difficult because it is not clear whether and when the dental spelling was used in English to distinguish the name of the sect. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the phrase 'lunatic lollers' seems to have been peculiar to the received version of the classification of beggars, although damage in the Ilchester manuscript means that this is not certain. The second instance is the clearer; where the received version has 'The whiche arn lunatik lollares and leperes a-boute' (Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, C x 137) (there is some loller/lorel variation), the Ilchester manuscript Prologue has 'Pe leedes pat ben lunatyk and le . . .', and Huntington Library HM 114 has 'Sep pei be lunatyk and lepers aboute'; characteristically Ilchester emends here where Huntington Library HM 114 has faulty alliteration. For the earlier instance (C ix 107) the evidence is less good because damage means that only part of the Ilchester reading can be recovered: '... ere lunatik and lepers aboute'; here Huntington Library HM 114 has 'Suche as lunatyk and lepers aboute'. There is no way of being certain that the Ilchester line contained another independent emendation such as 'leedes', although a late annotator noted simply 'lunatikes' beside the passage.¹³⁹

The complex connotations of 'loller' and the difficulties involved in interpreting the variation associated with the word in *Piers Plowman* are epitomised by the variants in the lines in passus viii: 'And frere faytour and

folk of pat ordre, That lollares and loseles lele men holdeth' (C VIII 73-4). Here a combination of grammatical ambiguity and variants means that there are almost as many possible meanings as manuscripts. In the version quoted, any one of friars, lollers and losels, and 'lele men' could be the subject of 'holdeth', and the position is complicated by loller/lore variation.¹⁴⁰ In addition, some manuscripts have 'true men', rather than 'lele men', despite damage to the alliteration.¹⁴¹ The phrase 'true men' seems to have been one of the terms Lollards liked to use for themselves.¹⁴² This variant is perhaps therefore additional evidence of the conflict over the word 'loller', but the manuscript evidence is too complex to make a more confident interpretation.

Medieval annotation in manuscripts of the poem in the main confirms the impression of the failure of 'loller' in the *Piers Plowman* sense, although there are exceptions. Bodleian Library Douce 104 is copiously annotated and illustrated in both false-hermit interpolations, but the 'loller' vocabulary is not used in the annotations; instead the annotator uses other, perhaps more familiar, terms from the passage: 'Beggars and bidders', 'begers pat hath lemmonys' and 'hermytes pat wonnyth by pe hey wey' in passus IX, and beside the Cornhill loller's confession 'I had noo wyll to do gode', and 'nota de clerkys'.¹⁴³ Of those manuscripts which have medieval annotation here, Huntington Library HM 143 is exceptional because the loller vocabulary is used. Here words and phrases from the text are not merely repeated in the notes, but adapted, perhaps for the guidance of readers. In the Cornhill passage the annotator uses the verbal noun 'lollynge', rather than the noun 'loller' of the text: 'hyer Conscience and Raysoun aratyde Wille for his lollynge'. This note brings out the *Piers Plowman* sense of 'loller', since it is a gloss to the passage in which the loller describes his idle ways.¹⁴⁴ In passus IX, the annotator distinguishes the two kinds of loller, marking 'lunatyke lollares' and later 'propure lollares'.¹⁴⁵ This might mean again that he did not expect his readers to be familiar with the *Piers Plowman* sense, nor to grasp the wordplay easily. This is perhaps supported by two other examples: 'byhold hyer of lollarne childe', and 'hyere mette Wille wyth Lollare to pe mete ward'.¹⁴⁶ In both cases usage is different from that in the passage. In the second example the annotator has used the generic term as a proper noun; in the first example he has extended it to those who in the text are termed beggars. Contrastingly, two manuscripts reflect interest in the 'etymology' passage, suggesting perhaps a familiarity with the tradition of wordplay on 'loller'. In Cambridge University Library Additional 4325 'Kyndeliche, by Crist, ben suche ycald "lollares"' (C IX 213) has been underlined in red ink, as is usual only for the Latin quotations in this manuscript.¹⁴⁷ In Bodleian Library Digby 102 there is a *nota* beside 'He pat lolleth is lame ...' (C IX 215).¹⁴⁸

Although the usage of 'loller' in the new anticlerical satire did not prevail against the competing anti-Wycliffite usage, there is textual evidence which suggests that the new satire as a whole early achieved a measure of success. The fate of the 'classification of beggars' is an index of the victories which

might be achieved under siege. The three various attempts at interpolation of this material – in C ix in the received text, in A Pro in the Ilchester manuscript and in the ploughing sequence in Huntington Library HM 114 – all suggest in their different ways an appreciation of the implications of the new satire. In order to assess the interpolations, it is necessary to describe briefly the character of the second textual tradition of the classification of beggars.¹⁴⁹ This version is shorter than the received text, for it seems to have included only one line and two quotations from the B-text material which occurs in the received version (where interpolation into the pardon sequence has been managed using this material). In addition, this shorter version omits other lines in comparison with the received C-text, many of them from the description of the true poor. In consequence, with the absence of the intrusive B-text material the structure of the shorter version is simpler and clearer, more like that of the traditional classification of monks. Here are treated sequentially the true poor, then false beggars and holy hermits, then the responsibility of prelates. The absence of the phrase 'lunatic loller' results in a less daring satire, but also means that here lunatics more clearly belong in the category of the true poor, to whom alms should be given. Metrically, this version seems to have been rough and uncertain. The compiler of Huntington Library HM 114 seems to have been unconcerned by this, but in the Ilchester manuscript there is much evidence of 'improvement'. In its shorter version, the classification of beggars was associated with the C-text Prologue passage on prelates and idolatry (C Pro 91–127), and perhaps also the following C-text Prologue passage on the power of the pope and the king. This final section of the sequence of C-text material occurs in the Ilchester Prologue, but not with the rest of the shorter version in Huntington Library HM 114, although it does occur here as a usual part of the B-text Prologue.

In the received C-text the loller interpolation is integrated with material on strong beggars from the pardon sequence, and is thus linked with brief satirical attacks on other groups (bishops, lawyers, merchants and others) through the metaphor of the pardon sequence. It is worth considering that the association here between the charge against these beggars of sexual liberty '[Thei] wedde [no] womman pat [pei] wip deele But as wilde bestes with wehee worpen vppe and werchen' (B VII 91–2) and the attributes of the lollers was provoked by the Free Spirit, libertine, reputation of continental begghards and other extraregulars.

In the Ilchester manuscript the second textual tradition of the classification of beggars has been interpolated into the A-text version of the Prologue. Here the usual brief descriptions of idlers have been augmented with the classification of beggars, which has been interpolated after the description of false hermits, and before the satirical reference to friars. By contrast with the familiar interpolation into C ix this arrangement suggests that the classification of beggars was considered to be related to the satire of the various clerical idlers in the Prologue, and important enough to dominate the opening passus of the poem. Accordingly, it means that in this arrangement the

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procedures and principles of the classification displace to a large extent those of the sequence of sightings which constitutes the first vision in the A-text. Additionally, in comparison with the context of the interpolation in the received C-text, in the Ilchester Prologue the issue of lay and religious idlers is linked with wider questions. In the Ilchester Prologue the classification of beggars is linked with passages on the power of the pope and the king, a more overtly political context, explicable in terms of contemporary anticlericalism, and consistent with the exploration of the implications of the new satire. There is some slender evidence that the Ilchester Prologue represents a tradition of interpolation of the classification of beggars, rather than an isolated occurrence. This is to be found in Harley 6041, an A-text with C-text continuation, of the first quarter of the fifteenth century, and in Dublin, Trinity College 213, a late fifteenth-century A-text.¹⁵⁰ In the Prologues in these manuscripts lines occur which are distinctive of the shorter version of the interpolations, at sites where interpolation occurs in the Ilchester manuscript.¹⁵¹ This may indicate the wider circulation of the second textual tradition (therefore its importance for scribes and readers) and perhaps the existence of some tradition of interpolation in the A-text Prologue.

In Huntington Library HM 114 the second textual tradition of the classification of beggars has been interpolated into a B-text. Unlike the Ilchester manuscript, here interpolation is characteristic of much of the rest of the text as well. This manuscript has been considered a conflation of material from all versions of the poem, copied in the first or second quarter of the fifteenth century.¹⁵² The scribe who copied it may also have been responsible for its compilation, for idiosyncratic texts compiled from a variety of sources are characteristic of his manuscript.¹⁵³ A full interpretation of the interpolation of the classification of beggars in this manuscript therefore should take into account the wider phenomenon. Whatever the compiler's practices and motives, however, here too the context into which the classification has been inserted has implications for the way in which the passage was interpreted. In this manuscript the classification of beggars has been worked into the account of wasters in the ploughing sequence. The choice of this location suggests that the compiler considered the passages on true and false hermits and the true poor to be related to the question of idle workers in the field. It suggests, therefore, an understanding of, and sympathy with, the view of religious poverty developed by the opponents of the religious orders during the closing decades of the fourteenth century.

Together, the three examples of interpolation of the classification of beggars passage are literary manifestations of the anticlerical threat to the traditions of the regular orders in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. The existence of different texts and forms of interpolation suggests that this part of the poem was considered to be an important and desirable passage, worth taking the trouble to seek out or rework. The various contexts chosen for interpolating the classification each suggest a commitment to the analysis of religious poverty proposed by the anticlerical opponents of the

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orders, for in each case the question of beggars is linked with wider questions: with the problem of idle workers in Huntington Library HM 114, with the power of the king and the pope in Ilchester, and in the received version, with the failings and duties of other classes. But perhaps the most telling aspect of all the examples is that they are all instances of the appropriation for the new anticlericalism of a form of satire which, intimately related to the origins and definition of the regular orders, lay at the heart of the monastic tradition. The nature of the literary appropriation is at once a part of, and a sign of, the threat to the authority of that tradition.

Clerical dominion and authority in new anticlerical literature

And lewte [lou3] on me [for] I loured [on pe frere];
 'Wherfore lourestow?' quod lewtee, and loked on me harde.
 'If I dorste', quod I, 'amonges men pis metels auowe!'
 '3is, by Peter and by Poul!' quod he and took hem bope to witnesse:
Non oderis fratres secreta in corde tuo set publice argue illos.
 'They wole aleggen also', quod I, 'and by pe gospel preuen:
Nolite iudicare quemquam.'
 'And wherof seruep lawe', quod lewtee, 'if no lif vndertoke it
 Falsnesse ne faiterie? for somewhat pe Apostle seide
Non oderis fratrem.
 And in pe Sauter also seip dauid pe prophete
Existimasti inique quod ero tui similis &c.
 It is *licitum* for lewed men to [legge] pe sope
 If hem likep and lest; ech a lawe it grauntep,
 Excepte persons and preestes and prelates of holy chirche.
 It fallep nou3t for pat folk no tales to telle
 Thou3 pe tale [were] trewe, and it touche[d] synne.
 Pyng pat al pe world woot, wherfore sholdestow spare
 To reden it in Retorik to arate dedly synne? ...' (B XI 84-102)

Clerical polemicists were often obliged to find authorities to defend their attacks on opponents. Lewte's biblical texts, and that imputed to the friars, had been pressed into this kind of service before. The secular cleric Richard FitzRalph took Joh. 7:24, '*Nolite iudicare secundum faciem: sed iustum iudicium iudicate*', for the text of his *proposicio Defensio Curatorum* against the friars. He used the text as an authority for his claim that he did not mean to attack an order approved by holy church and the pope, only to show where correction was necessary. Thus he attempted to defend his antifraternalism against any charge of error or heresy:

'Demep nou3t by pe face but ri3tful doom 3e deme,' John 8° c°. Holy Fader, *in* pe bygynnyng of my sermoun, ich make a protestacioun, *pat* it is nou3t myn entent to affirme to say, *noper* to holde eny ping, *pat* is contrarie to Cristen feip, *oper* to Cristen feip, *oper* to Cristen lore. Also, *pat* it is nou3t myn entent to counsaile, *noper* axe destruccioun & vndoyng of pe ordres of beggers, *pat* bep appreued by holy chirche, & conformed of popes; but y schal make euvidence, & *consaile* *pat* pese ordres schulde be brou3t to pe clenness of her first ordenaunce; & ich am alwey redy to pe correccioun of 3oure holynesse.¹

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The monk Uthred of Boldon took Lev. 19:17, 'Non oderis fratrem tuum in corde tuo set publice argue eum ne habeas super illo peccatum', as the authority for a similar defence. He claimed that in denouncing the friars he meant to reprehend only false friars, not the good and the faithful.² The strategy was an old one. As we have seen, thirteenth-century antifraternel satirists and polemicists traditionally took the posture of attacking not the approved orders of friars, but those who, although like them, did not adhere to their rule. This included both true apostates, and, especially, the semireligious or extraregulars such as beguines and beghards, who were closely associated with the orders, but not committed to the full profession. This strategy was associated with explicit denials that innocent members of the approved orders were objects of attack. Thus William of St Amour denied that his work was about friars, as has already been noted, and, probably in response to criticisms from opponents, seems to have added a passage stating this to *De Periculis*. Here he declared that he wrote not against any individual or status approved by the pope, but generally against the perils besetting the church.³ In the *Collectiones* he repeated this claim, adding that if anyone, secular or (surely with irony) even regular should find anything displeasing in this work, no-one should be offended, because there were good and evil in every status, as Jerome and Augustine said:

... non contra certam aliquam personam Ecclesiasticam; non contra statum aliquem per Sedem Apostolicam approbatum, dicere intendimus; sed generaliter contra pericula ecclesiae generalis, & contra illorum astutam malitiam, per quos illa pericula inducuntur ... Si quid igitur in hac compilatione inueniatur generaliter dictum, quod quibusdam, siue Regularibus, siue Saecularibus, forte displiceat; Nemo Saecularis, vel etiam Regularis, exinde offendatur; quoniam in omni statu est inuenire, & bonos & malos, & reprobatio malorum est laus bonorum.⁴

(... we do not intend to speak against any specific ecclesiastic, nor against any status approved by the Apostolic See, but generally against the perils of the church in general, and against the cunning malice of those through whom the perils are introduced ... Therefore, if anything meant generally in this work is found which displeases certain people, whether regulars or seculars, let no secular – or even regular – be offended, since both good and evil are to be found in every status, and reproof of the bad is praise of the good.)

In the *Roman de la Rose*, Jean de Meun defended similarly the part of the poem concerning Faus Semblant. His intention was simply to let his arrow fly generally at hypocrites, but if someone should wilfully receive the arrow, he could not be blamed.⁵ The strategy observed in these writers is comparable with that used by earlier antimonastic satirists. For example, Berengar of Poitiers, an early twelfth-century satirist who wrote against the new monastic orders, replied in these terms to those who objected to his satire. Writing to the Bishop of Mende, whose canons he was accused of attacking, he used a quotation from Jerome to support his claim that his remarks were not aimed at any particular group. Innocently, he wondered why they should wound themselves with the arrow from his quiver.⁶ Later in the century, Walter Map

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replied to the charge that he was a persecutor of religion: he claimed to attack faults, not ways of life; not the order, but those who falsely professed to follow it.⁷ Likewise, during the course of the *Piers Plowman* satire against the Great Doctor, the poet claims that he does not wish to 'grieve the good' by translating 'frater':

Holi writ bit men be war – I wol noȝt write it here
In englissh on auntere it sholde be reherced to ofte,
And greue perwip [pat goode ben] – ac gramariens shul re[d]e:
Vnusquisque a fratre se custodiat quia ut dicitur periculum est in falsis
fratribus. (B XIII 71–3a)

This is another example of the adaptation in *Piers Plowman* of the defence traditionally adopted by antireligious satirists. The meaning is ambiguous, but it seems to be that good friars will be hurt if the text against '*falsis fratribus*' is widely understood to refer to false friars.⁸ But in the Lewte sequence, when the Dreamer asks 'If I dorste . . . amonges men pis metels auowe' (B xi 86), the question of authority is answered less traditionally. The texts adduced may be traditional, but the basis for authority is new: 'It is *licitum* for lewed men to [legge] pe sope . . . ech a lawe it grauntep' (B xi 96–7).

The new anticlericalism required new answers to such questions, for it raised the problem of literary authority in a radically new way. What radically distinguished the new anticlericalism from previous traditions made the making of a new anticlerical literature both necessary and problematic. As we have seen, the basis of the new anticlericalism was the exploitation of a new theory of dominion by FitzRalph and his followers. This resulted in an account of dominion which divested all clerics of temporal lordship, and invested it in those members of the church who were not clerics. To the crown, to lay lords and to laymen fell the responsibility and authority for correcting the clergy; dominion rested with the laity, whose responsibility it was, where necessary, to exercise it: by disendowment, by denying alms, even by withholding or diverting bequests. But the responsibilities of anticlericalism did not end with temporal punishment and correction. The political act required for its completion the making of a new anticlerical literature. Anticlerical vocabulary, anticlerical interpretations of the Bible, anticlerical history, anticlerical satire were required to assert the new perspective, to defend the new policies, to counter and replace clerical polemic. In *Piers Plowman*, the adaptations of traditions of polemic and satire answered the call for an anticlerical literature. But the literary effort, though necessary, was problematic.

The account of the proper deployment of dominion in the church was theoretically plausible – if in practice extreme and unworkable – in respect of temporal correction, but as a paradigm for a literary strategy it was incomplete. Anticlericals were invested with the responsibility for making an anticlerical literature, but in order to do so were forced to begin work in a tradition whose authority their anticlericalism undermined. The attack on clerical dominion both gave the anticlerical writer his authority and divested

him of it. For those who adapted FitzRalph's theory of dominion were heirs to literary traditions of satire and polemic based on principles inimical to their own. Since these traditions had emerged from a succession of conflicts between clerical parties, they were, both historically and intrinsically, in their forms, language and rhetorical strategies, associated with the assertion of dominion by one group of clerics against another. The transference of dominion to the temporal powers therefore meant a crisis of authority for anticlerical writing. The layman might legitimately assert dominion over the clergy through practical correction, but to seek to defend the new anticlericalism through use of the literary tradition would be to use a medium founded on principles inimical to the new philosophy.

As we have seen, the attack on clerical dominion always implied, and often overtly was, an attack on the intellectual authority of clerics, especially on their literary principles and practices. Clerical claims for authority over the interpretation of the Bible were in the new anticlericalism associated with the sinful assertion of temporal dominion. The friars and other clerics who neglected evangelical poverty were, as it has been argued, seen as 'glosers' of the law of charity, interpreting the Bible for their own profit. A sign that such clerics were Antichrist's prophets and preachers was that such false doctors turned to pagan philosophers as their authorities, rather than relying on the fathers of the Christian church, and above all, on the Bible itself. The challenge to clerical dominion was at once an attack on clerical literary authority. But new anticlerical literature was itself a target in the conflict.

From its beginnings with FitzRalph the anticlericalism of the later fourteenth century emerged as a conflict over old and new, clerical and anticlerical, ways of reading and writing. The clerics tried to defend their position by insisting on the old distinction between 'lered' and 'lewed' which the new anticlericalism had undermined. In this period the conflict over poverty was primarily one between clerical and anticlerical language and interpretation. The creation of a new vocabulary and analysis of poverty based on the new anticlerical principles required a reinterpretation of the key biblical texts. For the anticlerical polemicists, this reinterpretation was underpinned with biblical authority; it was an assertion of the meaning of charity, a winning back of its true meaning from the obfuscations of clerical 'glosers'. For their clerical opponents it was 'lewed'; often demonstrably (they claimed) based on mistranslation and ignorance of Latin. Their claim extended to writing as well as reading. Anima asserts that 'newe clerkes' cannot 'versifye fayre':

For is noon of pise newe clerkes, whoso nymep hede,
[That kan versifie faire ne formaliche enditen] ... (B xv 373-4)

This counters claims of the kind made in a Latin poem by a pro-fraternal writer, that antifraternals verses were deficient metrically, because the poets were ignorant:

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Hij simul et clerici rixas, rithmos edunt.
Et sicut sunt inscij, legem metri edunt [? ledunt] ...⁹

(Both these [friars] and [secular] clerics put out polemic and verses, and ignorant as they [seculars] are, they damage the metre ...)

There were special implications for English literature. As has been seen, the use of English was not merely characteristic in much anticlerical writing; it was itself an issue in the conflict. The use of English was intimately associated with the development and assertion of the anticlerical position. The anticlerical writers developed and put their case largely in English. The reason was more than one of mere practical expediency, which was how their enemies chose to attack it. The friar Richard Maidstone, it will be remembered, complained that his opponent Ashwardby used English for the political purpose of ingratiating himself with the laity. For anticlerical writers, however, as has been seen, English had become associated with the rejection of 'glosing', with access to biblical truth and with the assertion of its anticlerical meaning. It will be remembered that the Wife of Bath won dominance over Jankyn, the 'clerk of Oxenford', as a consequence of tearing three leaves out of the book he was reading. This is a good image for what this study of *Piers Plowman* suggests about the fundamental nature of the problem posed, the extremity of the response provoked and the conflict which was caused by the literary implications of the new anticlericalism. The attack on clerical literary dominion implied in anticlerical satire and polemic was part of a wider conflict over the principles and practices of clerical literary tradition, and the authority of literature associated with anticlericalism.

The task confronting anticlerical writers was to show how their literature was contrastingly authoritative, to prove that their adaptations of clerical traditions did not rest, as the traditions had formerly rested, on illicit clerical dominion. For anticlerical writers had in many ways taken the place of clerics. Sire *Penetrans domos* had been driven out of houses, but his power of access to conscience was not merely diminished by new anticlerical literature, it was usurped. The new anticlericalism was at once anti-intellectual and bookish. Anticlericals attacked clerical 'glosers', but the authority for the new anticlericalism was itself located in the Bible. Just as at the end of *Piers Plowman* Conscience cries after grace, undefended by 'clergie', so Conscience, not a cleric, is granted landlordship over the territory of scripture, and it falls to Piers Plowman to work that land and reap its harvest. This literary disendowment of the clergy had to be justified.

Writers such as Wycliffites and Reformers who looked to *Piers Plowman* as the source of a viable and successful way of writing, may have seen the poem, retrospectively, as the site of a triumph rather than a battle, fought, not wholly honourably, with weapons plundered from the enemy, for a territory the anticlerical claim to which was suspect. That the problem of literary authority soon largely receded from view is implied by the evidence of early

readings. It is notable that in the introductory notes to his second edition, Crowley ignored much of the rhetorical uneasiness of the poem when he wrote, as if the poem itself speaks, 'it declareth . . .'.¹⁰ The beginning of this testimony of success is detectable in the medieval marginal annotations in the manuscripts, where in most cases the reader is usually alerted to the poem's moral, religious and satirical content rather than its formal or rhetorical structures.¹¹ But features recurrent in the poem betray the stresses exerted by the crisis over literary authority. One might be termed the 'clerical aside', to characterise those brief, but recurrent, instances when the speaker seems to speak as a cleric to clerics. The exclusiveness is characteristically associated with clerical knowledge and practices of reading and writing. An example occurs in the passage quoted above, where the poet refuses to translate 'frater' from clerics' Latin into layman's English. The poet restricts the private joke to other 'gramariens' (B XIII 73), refusing to translate 'frater', and commenting on the friars' propensity to 'glose' this text. In the C-text revision this 'in-joke' raises the question of authority:

As Poul pe apostle prechede to pe peple ofte:
Periculum est in falsis fratribus!
Holy writ byt men be waer and wysly hem kepe
That no fals frere thorw flaterynge hem bygyle;
Ac me thynketh loth, thogh y Latyn knowe, to lacken eny secte,
For alle be we brethrene, thogh we be diuersely clothed. (C xv 76-80)

For all its anticlericalism, the 'frater' pun was untranslatable, and hence irremediably clerical.¹² There are several instances in Anima's speech where a satirical or polemical anticlerical passage is made to appear self-consciously and exclusively 'clerical'. Again, in these examples of the 'clerical aside', exclusiveness is associated with clerical knowledge and practices of reading and writing. For example, Anima quotes Ps. 97[96]:7 and Ps. 4:3 without translation, and then directs 'ye grete clerkes' to the 'glose' (B xv 82) of the text. A little later, the long quotation from the *Opus Imperfectum* is quoted without translation, and Anima remarks that if 'lewed [ledes]' (B xv 119) knew its meaning and author, priests would have to reform. Again, Anima directs an untranslated text from Job at religious, remarking 'If lewed men knewe pis latyn pei wolde loke whom pei yeue' (B xv 319). Such 'clerical asides' stand out, by contrast not only with their less exclusive contexts, but also with instances when the speaker identifies with the 'lewed'. For example, although the satirist's defence is associated with the clerical aside, in the encounter with Lewte quoted at the beginning of this section the poet is treated as a layman: 'It is *licitum* for lewed men to [legge] pe sope' (B xi 96). Again, Anima cries out at clerics 'If I lye on yow to my lewed wit, ledep me to brennyng!' (B xv 83).

Another feature is almost the opposite of the clerical aside, because in these cases the viewpoint is that of the 'lewed'. Whereas the self-consciousness of the clerical aside is usually redeemed by its irony, this feature is associated with rhetorical breakdown. It is hard to find a suitable term for it, but

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'anti-intellectual impasse' or "'lewed" – "lered" stalemate' convey some of its characteristics. The second vision ends with a conflict between Piers and the Priest conducted in terms of the opposition between the 'lered' and the 'lewed'. The A-text, if it was a later continuation of the poem preserved in the Z-text, begins with this opposition, but breaks down later over the same difficulty. A similar conclusion applies if it is accepted that textual evidence in A-text manuscripts reveals a 'process of incrementation from passus VII onwards'.¹³ It is a difficulty over the 'lewed'–'lered' distinction which precipitates the quarrel between Piers and the Priest. The Priest must read the pardon ("“Piers,” quap a prest [po], “pi pardon muste I rede, For I shal construe iche clause & kenne it pe on englissh.””, A VIII 89–90), yet in challenging the Priest, Piers seems absurdly clerical ('peter, as me pinkep, Pou art le[tr]id a litel', A VIII 118–19) and the Priest paradoxically 'lewed' ("“Lewide lorel!” quap peris', A VIII 124).¹⁴ The quarrel brings the vision of Piers to an end, and causes the waking poet to reflect on the authority of what he has dreamed. The A-text seems to have ended at the same impasse, with 'lewide iottis' (A XI 311), such as poor ploughmen, herdsman and cobblers, opposed by the hysterically anti-intellectual speaker to clerics 'pat conne many bokis' (A XI 308).¹⁵

The common factor linking these rhetorical features is that of a difficulty over establishing the relationship between an anticlerical speaker, and 'clergie'. Where the speaker admits to 'clergie', or uses clerical language and literary procedures, then he is often self-consciously and guiltily 'clerical' – as with the clerical aside. The presence of the device points up the rhetorical problem, but is reasonably successful as a way of establishing that the anticlerical speaker is not elsewhere speaking as a cleric to clerics. However, where the speaker establishes a rejection of 'clergie' through anti-intellectualism, or unfavourable contrast of clerics with the 'lewed', then this is sometimes associated with rhetorical breakdown: with the end of a vision, or even, in the A-text, with an intermission from writing altogether. Sometimes embarrassment concerning the identity of the speaker or confusion over the poet's identity are symptoms. One instance is a notorious phenomenon among readers of the poem: the identification of the dreaming poet as Piers.¹⁶ Another instance is not so notorious, but is an embarrassing difficulty which has often been noted by readers: the unresolved question of the identity of the anti-intellectual speaker who defends poverty against Clergie in the B-text. Trajan, Lewte and the Dreamer have all been proposed as possible candidates.¹⁷ In the C-text it is made clear that it is not the Dreamer who is the anti-intellectual defender of poverty, for here one Rechelesnesse is identified as the speaker who 'aresenede Clergie' (C XIII 128). The identification of the anticlerical speaker as Rechelesnesse implies a relationship with 'clergie'. Rechelesnesse, as we have seen, speaks for unvowed poverty, disregard for a religious commitment. Thus, Rechelesnesse is a kind of gyrovague state, a state of association with, yet absence of commitment to, 'professional', voluntary, poverty. As such, Rechelesnesse is

characteristic of recurrent attempts in *Piers Plowman* to articulate a legitimate relationship between an anticlerical speaker and 'clergie', by exploiting the positive, as well as the negative, side of the gyrovague. Usually, these attempts focus on the status of the poet himself.

Tellingly, when the poet comes, in C v, to defend his new anticlerical satire, the question of his authority is explored in terms of his own clerical status, and association with 'lollers'. Gyrovague language is used to explore and articulate the relationship between the anticlerical writer and clerics, here as more fitfully elsewhere in the poem. Rhetorical unease in the B-text is matched by vagueness and inconsistency in the treatment of the poet. Like the gyrovagues and extraregulars in the continental satires, he shadows the friars through the poem. The detail is well known: he is dressed 'In habite as an heremite, vnholý of werkis' (B Pro 3); 'In manere of a mendynaunt' (B XIII 3); like the apostles, crazily refusing to salute anyone with 'God loke yow, lordes' (B xv 9); careless of personal poverty, 'As a recchelees renk pat [recchep of no wo]' (B XVIII 2); called 'faitour' (B xx 5), like a false friar, by Nede. Like his continental counterparts his clothing 'yrobed in russet' (a coarse cloth of grey or brown) (B VIII 1) is a mark of his association with the russet-wearing friars. Just so, the beguines were often rebuked for wearing a grey habit like the Franciscans with whom they were associated, and the tradition continued (with what basis in fact is not clear) when this satirical topic was turned against those the English called 'lollards', who, their enemies said, wore russet, like the friars.¹⁸ In the encounter with Lewte the poet is given a similar relationship with the friars, as a member of 'hir Fraternitee' (B XI 56) (a layman associated with the order but not bound by its rule). The choice of 'Lewte' for the Dreamer's interlocuter here may have been prompted by the exploration of the poet's relationship with the friars, for the word seems to have the connotations of allegiance and mutual obligation associated with 'fealty'.¹⁹ Even the Dreamer's surrogate, Haukyn, has many gyrovague characteristics, when he stands in for the Dreamer to receive the teaching of Pacionce. Haukyn is a false hermit ('Yhabited as an heremyte'), both like a sarabaite ('an ordre by hymselfe') and a gyrovague ('Religion saun3 rule [and] resonable obedience', B XIII 284-5); a gyrovague pedlar, a false beggar ('Boldest of beggeris', B XIII 302); compared with minstrels ('for I kan neiper taboure ne trompe . . .', B XIII 230). In the C-text Cornhill interpolation the gyrovague tradition is used at length to articulate the poet's relationship with 'clergie'. Here the life of the cleric who expects his vocation to be his source of livelihood is satirised as the gyrovague's life. The poet associates the discovery of authority for his satire ('as resoun me tauhte', C v 5) with a personal rejection of the life of the 'professional' cleric, and an admission that he too has been a loller. He relates how, although at first he tried to defend the life of those clerics who 'sitten and wryten, Redon and resceyuen pat resoun ouhte to spene' (C v 68-9), in the end Resoun's and Consience's arguments prevailed against those of the poet. The language is different, but a similar relationship between the poet and 'clergie' is suggested

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in the B-text encounter with Ymaginatif. Here, life as a poet is articulated not in terms of the gyrovague, but in terms of an amusement for a cleric. In the encounter with Ymaginatif the poet defends his 'making' against Ymaginatif's unfavourable comparison of his activity with that of the preaching friars. Ymaginatif remarks satirically that there are plenty of books and 'many a peire freres' preaching on 'dowel':

'... And pow medlest pee wip makynge and my3test go seye pi sauter,
And bidde for hem pat 3yuep pee breed, for per are bokes y[n]owe
To telle men what dowel is, dobet and dobest bope,
And prechours to preuen what it is of many a peire freres.' (B XII 16-19)

The poet replies that for him 'making' is simply an amusement, not part of his clerical activity. Ymaginatif's charge is turned to a defence; it is true that making poetry is not the way he earns a living officially. The language is different, but the relationship implied is similar; for the post-medieval reader the concept which brings together the notion of reading and writing for private amusement, the rejection of association with those whose clerical vocation is their living and the language of the gyrovague is the concept of the 'non-professional'. Such writers used to be 'professional' clerics, but those who now legitimately write anticlerically may be so no longer.

The notion is paralleled elsewhere. The distinction between the 'professional' and the 'non-professional' was implied in Wyclif's concept of 'poor priests'. Thus a place was found in Wyclif's radically anticlerical thought for those who followed the clerical vocation of preaching, but supported themselves by manual labour. Poor priests were an integral part of Wyclif's thought, the earliest references to them dating as early as 1372-3. These priests were contrasted with those such as friars and other clerics who lived from casual services, and who are satirised in *Piers Plowman* as lollers.²⁰ Their position might be thought of as the clerical counterpart of the continental status of the extraregular, who financed a quasi-religious life through manual labour. Further evidence of the growth of a notion of 'non-professionalism' is perhaps also to be gathered from the use of minstrel imagery in the poem and elsewhere. As we have seen, minstrels were traditionally considered to be members of a 'dishonest profession', and the image of the 'professional' minstrel was exploited by antifraternial writers. With the 'joculatores Dei' of Franciscan writings, and the 'munstrals of heuene' of *Piers Plowman*, the metaphor was complicated by the new notion of the 'non-professional' minstrel.²¹ Using the distinction between the 'professional' and the 'non-professional' writer as the moral basis for new anticlerical writing may have been partly determined by, and partly an exploitation of, the actual economic position of the Middle English writer, who almost invariably, Burrow noted, was not a 'professional' writer, but earned his living in some other way.²² A consequence of the appearance of non-professional writers is surely the emergence of the professional scribe, whose duties probably extended to editing and publishing.²³ Russell's work

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on the presentation of certain C-text manuscripts and remarks on the textual nature of the C-text suggest that the final version of the poem was almost certainly published by professionals of this sort.²⁴ Such a basis for authorship is mirrored by, and to that extent supported by, what has been deduced about the poem's readership. Work on evidence such as manuscript ownership and references in wills suggests that the poem's readers were often 'non-professional' readers. The evidence suggests a class of readers comprised of the lower ranks of the clergy and book-owning, literate lay men and women who read intellectually serious literature for their private edification and entertainment. The challenge to clerical dominion in every area – to possession, intellectual authority and sacerdotal power – gave this development its authority.²⁵

Taking the habit of the extraregular was, as we have seen, an old device used by satirists. As well as exposing hypocrisy successfully, the device protected the satirist. In order to support their claim that they did not mean to attack any religious profession, but simply abuses, antireligious satirists had developed this strategy as a means of seeming to endorse the values of a profession, while at the same time attacking them. By attacking the gyrovague, the satirist seemed to be endorsing the rule and profession the gyrovague neglected, yet this was in reality a method of attacking that rule and the order itself. William of St Amour and Jean de Meun were among many antifraternel satirists who used the friars' semireligious or extraregular associates, as well as the true apostates, as proxy targets for the friars themselves. The habit which concealed the hypocrite therefore also concealed the satirist's true target. The gyrovague's falseness was therefore closely associated with the satirist's own procedures of self-defence and self-concealment. This identification was especially close when the satirist's target was attacked via a device such as the confessional monologue, as in the case of Faus Semblant. The satirist hid behind the habit of the extraregular: of the layman who did not profess a rule but was closely associated with the regulars, or of the professed regular who no longer actually followed the rule. In order to attack a religious order or profession, the satirist exploited the distinction between the regular and the extraregular, using the habit of the extraregular as his cover. It was a strategy for an outsider, who in reality wished to attack an entire profession, but to maintain the semblance of endorsing its values.

This strategy provided the basis for the solutions to the literary problem explored in *Piers Plowman* and some contemporary writings. It provided a way of writing traditional satire without endorsing the clerical values which the tradition asserted. In *Piers Plowman* this possibility is exploited in the Cornhill loller interpolation. Here traditional antimendicant satire is exploited, but its values are not endorsed. The way the traditional strategy has been exploited is especially clear from a comparison with the Faus Semblant satire in the *Roman de la Rose*. The antimendicant speech made by Faus Semblant is an attack both on mendicancy and on himself. The speaker is

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undermined as a hypocrite, yet his attack is endorsed. Likewise, the Cornhill loller's satire of bag-baggers is exploited, but the speaker himself is exposed as a loller. As was noted in chapter 5, this is a version of the secular-mendicant conflict in which the claims of neither side are supported. The adapted rhetorical strategy, however, permits the clerical satirical traditions associated with that conflict to be exploited, without actually endorsing clerical values. This attack on clerical dominion is not simultaneously an assertion of clerical dominion.

Characteristic forms and rhetorical strategies have been noted by students of *Piers Plowman* and of contemporary satirical writings which may all be considered versions of this attempt to make a legitimate anticlerical satire. The use of a satirised clerical speaker as a mouthpiece for anticlerical satire is a characteristic strategy. A good example, with a clear debt to *Piers Plowman*, is the use of friars as speakers of antifraternal satire in *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*. Here attacks by members of the different orders upon each other mean that the satire is effective while the friars' individual claims are all undermined. It has been suggested that there may have been a 'convention' of 'paired polemical poems'.²⁶ It is possible to argue that the linking of anticlerical satire and polemic from opposing viewpoints in such cases achieves a very similar ironic exploitation of clerical traditions. Chaucer's Friar-Summoner conflict, like the Cornhill loller interpolation, achieves a new, ironic, perspective on the secular-mendicant conflict. *Friar Daw's Reply* and *Upland's Rejoinder* were clearly each composed as part of a similar series, suggesting that readers should be more sceptical than hitherto when reading the jangling of this 'Jack-Daw' debate. Other rhetorical features noted by readers of late medieval anticlerical satire may be considered as part of the new strategy. The satirised clerical speaker should be linked with the convention identified by Rigg of the 'feigned friar'.²⁷ Here the gyrovague or apostate is given authority by virtue of his status as gyrovague or apostate. In examples of this tradition the satirist usually claims to have been a member of the order he is attacking, but to have left it once he had realised the shameful truth about the members of the profession. In *Piers Plowman* a clear, unnoticed adaptation occurs in Wrape's antireligious confession ('I was som tyme a frere, And pe Couentes Gardyner', B v 137-8). Another unnoticed example occurs in an interpolation at the end of *Jack Upland*:

jacke in pi ianglinge charite pe w<ant>s for pou pin-chist at oure pounce as a parid schrewe pis is pe leperist lessoun pat euer 3it j herde of lelid or of lewid <da>ies of my lijf Seynt ffraunc<e>s <curs> & al foure ordris come vpon pat fals peef pat pus pee hap <en>formed for pe pointis of oure priuytees he hap prickid to p< > or pou art apostata & proued al pis pi silf²⁸

Another characteristic of satire of this period has been identified as the use of the 'uplandish' speaker, such as the Cornhill loller: 'y leue yn London and opelond bothe' (C v 44).²⁹ In examples such as *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede* and *Jack Upland* such a figure (Jack Upland or Pierce Ploughman) is the repository of endorsed 'lewed' simplicity and contributes to the ironic

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perspective on clerical values. Such cases are solutions to the anti-intellectual impasse. Chaucer explored yet another comparable strategy when he made fragment D of the *Canterbury Tales*. The woman, as well as the 'uplandish' speaker, or the apostate, could legitimately speak anticlerically. It is fitting that in this fragment it is the Wife of Bath who holds her own against the Pardoner, the Summoner and the Friar. Her anti-intellectual rejection of 'auctoritee' and 'glosing' may be thought of as part of the strategy for using the Friar's and the Summoner's anticlerical satire. Finally, such strategies are mirrored in Chaucer's *General Prologue*. Mann's study shows that Chaucer turned the values of each pilgrim against him, using his victim's own language to undermine all of his class, while seeming to condemn only the individual. Mann treated the *General Prologue* as an example of 'estates satire', but with the language she was drawn to use of Chaucer's rhetorical strategy she betrayed the importance of the antireligious tradition. She urged (using the words in their modern senses) that what was important in Chaucer's portraits were the pilgrims' 'professional characteristics', and noted that 'Chaucer wants us to react as laymen'.³⁰

The development of a viable rhetorical strategy for anticlerical satire is in the Cornhill interpolation associated at once with the examination of its moral authority, and the beginnings of the articulation of the poet's self. The discovery of authority marks the beginnings of the discovery of the author. However, although the gyrovague tradition was exploitable as a way of articulating a relationship between the anticlerical writer and 'clergie', this did not wholly solve the problem of authority. The gyrovague tradition could express better what the poet was not, rather than what he was:

'That is soth,' y saide, 'and so y beknowe
That y haue tynt tyme and tyme myspened;
Ac 3ut, I hope, as he pat ofte hath ychaffared
And ay loste and loste, and at pe laste hym happed
A bouhte suche a bargayn he was pe bet euere,
And sette al his los at a leef at the laste ende,
Suche a wynnyng hym warth thorw wordes of grace.
Simile est regnum celorum thesauro abscondito in agro,
Mulier que inuenit dragmam, etc.
So hope y to haue of hym pat is almyghty
A gobet of his grace, and bigynne a tyme
That alle tymes of my tyme to profit shal turne.'
'Y rede the,' quod Resoun tho, 'rape the to bigynne
The lyif pat is louable and leele to thy soule' –
'3e, and contynue,' quod Consience; and to pe kyrke y wente.

(C v 91-104)

The poet never does remove the gyrovague's mask. The reader never learns what life it was that he was 'to bigynne' to satisfy Resoun and Consience. The author's status is established only negatively. 'The lyif pat is louable' is not the life of the Cornhill loller. When the poet articulates his presence in the poem, it is, paradoxically, only to deny identity. Exposure of the hypocrite

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conceals the poet. The rhetorical difficulty of establishing a relationship between an anticlerical speaker and 'clergie' is thus intimately associated not only with the problem of authority, but also with the problem of the poet's identity. The problem of authority and the problem of the author are the same. If elaborate rhetorical strategies were required to use clerical literary traditions, and yet not to speak as a cleric, then clearly this had implications for the articulation of the poet's own identity. The possibility must be considered that it was not yet possible to use the cleric's activities simply as a figure for anticlerical writing, because no way had yet been established of distinguishing between the new anticlerical writer and the cleric. To articulate a relationship with, and difference from, the clerical literary tradition was therefore to articulate the relationship between the poet and the cleric. But the antireligious tradition only allowed the poet to say who, in generic terms, he used to be and therefore who he was not now. Who would the 'non-professional' usurper of clerical literary authority be? The poet could not yet say who, in literary terms, he was to become. As yet it was still unclear who would be discovered behind the mask of the gyrovague.³¹

In the writing of *Piers Plowman* much, certainly, had been accomplished. The literary challenges of the new anticlericalism had been confronted, and many of its demands met. Removal of dominion from clerics had been a seizure of dominion for anticlericals. Thus the seizure of power was creative as well as destructive. In *Piers Plowman* that power became an energy-source for new anticlerical making. After the initial explosions of the conflict, the first fragments to cool were the elements for a new anticlerical literature: new language, new biblical interpretation, new salvation history, new satire and, finally, a new anticlerical reader: at the end of the poem Conscience became lord over the former clerical territories; and so the Christian conscience became the writer's final target and the reader's final guide. Only the new anticlerical author remained uncreated. What kind of writer had usurped the clergy's literary lordship? What author could penetrate the house of conscience, plough scripture, farm clerical limitations, passus by passus exploiting clerical territories, and yet not assert clerical lordship? The new anticlerical author remained concealed behind the mask of the gyrovague.

Notes

Preface

- 1 The 'anticlericalism' which is the subject of this book may, of course, be expected not only to be 'new' in its time, but also to be different from that of later periods, such as Reformation anticlericalism, of which a detailed analysis is needed; see Haigh, 'Anticlericalism and the English Reformation' and the introduction to Haigh, ed., *The English Reformation Revised*.
- 2 Hudson, *English Wycliffite Writings*, p. 10. For a survey of the evidence for dating *Piers Plowman* see Schmidt, *B-Text*, p. xvi. The dating of the material in the A-text and the earlier part of the Z manuscript text (Bodley 851) is less crucial for the purposes of this study, since most of the material commented on here comes from the later versions. Moreover, even if it is correct to place the earliest period of composition in the 1360s, by then, as will be shown, the controversy over clerical dominion had been inaugurated as a consequence of the friar issue in the 1350s.

I Introduction: tradition and the new anticlericalism

- 1 See p. 190 n.139 for references and other examples.
- 2 See p. 190 n.138 for references and other examples.
- 3 See p. 190 n.138.
- 4 CUL Ll 4 14 f. 65^v beside B XIII 434; Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 f. 58^v beside C XIII 123 (B XI 312).
- 5 Oriel 79 f. 13^v beside B III 313; Bod. Lib. Douce 104 f. 2^r and BL Addit. 10574 f. 2^r beside C Pro 81 (B Pro 83).
- 6 Oriel 79 f. 40^v beside B x 311, f. 45^v beside B XI 276.
- 7 Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 f. 72^v beside C XVI 272 (B xv 128); BL Cott. Vesp. B XVI f.66^r beside C XVI 247 (B xv 96).
- 8 Bod. Lib. Douce 104 ff. 106^v, 107^r beside C XXII 10 (B xx 10) and C XXII 35 (B xx 35).
- 9 Oriel 79 f. 87[91]^r beside B xx 306; f. 83[87]^v beside B XIX 479.
- 10 Russell, 'Early Responses', p. 283, noted the great contrast between what medieval and modern readers considered to be of most interest in the poem, remarking that the medievals were, above all, interested in implications for the clergy, and related ethical questions. Norton-Smith, *William Langland*, pp. 50-1, observed that marginalia in Bod. Lib. Laud Misc. 581 indicated the importance of satire for early readers.
- 11 There is no modern edition of William's *De Periculis* or *Collectiones*; for this study the prints in the seventeenth-century *Opera Omnia* have been used. There were several redactions of the *De Periculis*; see Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour*, pp. 212-27, and for background to the *Collectiones* see Fleming, "'Collations'". One of William's *quaestiones* has been used for this study: an examination of the

- question of whether the able-bodied should beg, *De Valido Mendicante* (1255) (*Opera Omnia*, pp. 80–7). For the course of the dispute see Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour*, and for discussion and interpretation of the issues involved Dawson, 'William of Saint-Amour'. For English MSS of William's writings see Szittyá, 'Antifraternal Tradition', p. 290 n. 10, and for the question of dissemination generally, see Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 62–122. An apocalyptic tract, *De Antichristo*, originated during the period and may have been written by William; it was used by Adams in connection with *Piers Plowman* (Adams, 'Need'), but has not been used here, because it is not clear that it circulated widely, or was known in England (see further p. 211 n. 147). For accounts of the conflict in which William was engaged, and of the part of his opponents, especially the friars Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure, see Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour*; Fleming, "'Collations'"; Moorman, *Franciscan Order*, pp. 141–53; and Douie, 'St. Bonaventura's Part in the Conflict between the Seculars and the Mendicants at Paris'.
- 12 Examples of historical studies which emphasise the debt of defenders of the secular clergy in the later fourteenth century to William and his followers are Williams, 'Relations'; Copeland, M. A. thesis 1938; Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', pp. 341–2. For literary studies see immediately below.
 - 13 Williams, 'Chaucer', p. 513; Fleming, '*Summoner's Tale*' (cf. also Fleming, 'Anticlerical Satire').
 - 14 Szittyá, 'Antifraternal Tradition', p. 209; see also Szittyá, 'Friar as False Apostle'. Szittyá, in his *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 144–51, argued that William's anticlericalism was fundamentally similar to FitzRalph's, and that differences arose from their different stances, of prophet and reformer. For his work on *Piers Plowman* see Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 247–87. Note also Szittyá, Ph.D. thesis 1971, a study of the sources of the antifraternal tradition which includes a substantial section on *Piers Plowman*.
 - 15 Havely, 'Chaucer', pp. 259–60.
 - 16 Havely, 'Chaucer', p. 260; for possible explanations see chapter 2. Havely's article 'Chaucer's Friar' was based on a similar use of 'tradition' to explain the satirical association between friars and merchants.
 - 17 Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 247.
 - 18 Adams, 'Need', p. 289 n. 28. This interpretation of the fourteenth-century reception of the antifraternal tradition was used in Aers, '*Piers Plowman* and Problems in the Perception of Poverty', with the result that this study, which seeks to reject an association between the tradition and *Piers Plowman*, advances an account of poverty in the poem based on inadequate investigation of the contemporary sources.
 - 19 Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 101; W. R. Thomson, 'The Image of the Mendicants'.
 - 20 There is no definitive history of anticlericalism in the later fourteenth century. For a brief discussion of the importance of anticlericalism in the period, and of its wider political context, see McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, pp. 289–91. For a narrative account of some of the main disputes and events associated with anticlericalism in the later fourteenth century see Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), pp. 234–61. A good brief introduction to the major issues under debate is Pantin, *English Church*, pp. 123–35, see also David Knowles, *Religious Orders*, vol. 2, pp. 61–89. The major political and religious themes which characterised the period's anticlericalism are discussed in Leff, *Dissolution*, pp. 118–44.
 - 21 For the implications of the plague for the clergy see Courtenay, 'Effect of the Black Death'.

Notes to pages 6–9

- 22 McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, p. 285; Holmes, *Good Parliament*, pp. 11–12.
- 23 Clarke, *Medieval Representation*, pp. 25–32.
- 24 Holmes, *Good Parliament*, pp. 13, 16.
- 25 McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, pp. 406–23.
- 26 Holmes, *Good Parliament*, pp. 13, 46–56.
- 27 Holmes, *Good Parliament*, pp. 16ff.
- 28 V. H. Galbraith, 'Articles'; Catto, 'Alleged Great Council'.
- 29 Cf. Hudson, 'Wycliffism', p. 70.
- 30 McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, p. 289.
- 31 For a brief narrative see Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 123–31, and for a selective bibliography of studies by Gwynn and others relevant to FitzRalph's dispute with the friars see Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', pp. 315–16 n. 1.
- 32 For a list of printed editions of FitzRalph's writings see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 493.
- 33 Hammerich, 'FitzRalph and the Mendicants'. An attempt has been made to set this work in the context of politics at Avignon; see Coleman, 'FitzRalph's anti-mendicant "Proposicio"'.¹
- 34 Of the eight books which make up the work, Poole printed the first four, with the chapter headings of Books Five, Six and Seven. Brock, Ph.D. thesis 1953, includes an edition of Books Five, Six and Seven, which has been consulted. Many extracts from the later books were quoted by Mathes, 'Poverty Movement'. For the purposes of the present study Bod. Lib. MS Auct. F. infra 1.2 ff. 1^r–83^r has been consulted for Books Five, Six and Seven.
- 35 Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 365–6.
- 36 The first five, perhaps six, books were written by 1351 (Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 137). For Oxford circulation see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 377–8. Hughes and Brock provide lists of the many extant fourteenth- and fifteenth-century MSS which testify to the wide circulation of this part of the work (Hughes, Ph.D. thesis 1928, vol. 1, pp. 26–8; Brock, Ph.D. thesis 1953, p. lxi). Walsh, 'Manuscripts', noted that Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek CVP 1430 is the most important MS, as it includes authorial marginal annotations and corrections, possibly even in FitzRalph's own hand, which were incorporated into all subsequent MSS (p. 70, and cf. Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 475).
- 37 Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), p. 229.
- 38 Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 433 n. 87 and p. 472. For the present study Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 180 has been consulted for Book Eight (ff. 90^r–128^v).
- 39 For this study the EETS edition of Trevisa's translation has been cited, except where a comparison of the Latin and English texts is important, when the print in Goldast's *Monarchia* has been used. For the date and background of the *proposicio* see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 413–14, 422–6, and for lists, numbers and circulation of MSS see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 468; Gwynn, 'Sermon-Diary', pp. 45–6; Walsh, 'Manuscripts', p. 67 n. 4; and Walsh, 'Archbishop FitzRalph', p. 223 n. 1. The preparation of a catalogue of FitzRalph MSS in European libraries (numbering at least 182 codices) has been announced by Walsh; see *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 469. T. Dolan has an edition of the *proposicio* in progress.
- 40 Fowler, *Piers the Plowman*, pp. 185–205.
- 41 Doyle and Parkes, 'Production'. For MSS of Trevisa's translation of FitzRalph's *Defensio Curatorum* see Perry's edition, pp. xv–xxvii, and add Huntington Lib. MS HM 28561 (*Index of Middle English Prose*, Handlist 1, p. 42).

- 42 For the manuscripts of FitzRalph's sermons see Gwynn, 'Sermon-Diary', pp. 2–17, and for the four London Sermons, pp. 46–7, and Walsh, 'Manuscripts', p. 68 n. 5. For some remarks on circulation see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 187, 418, 471. Few have been printed in modern times; T. Dolan has an edition of the four London Sermons in progress. In the present study editions of four sermons by Gwynn and Zimmerman have been used where appropriate, otherwise MS Bodley 144 has been used (described by Gwynn, 'Sermon-Diary', pp. 2–4; titles, dates and places of delivery listed by Gwynn, 'Sermon-Diary', pp. 48–57; MS dated c. 1400 by Parkes, *English Cursive Book Hands*, p. 11). Gwynn's numbering of the sermons has been followed in the present study. FitzRalph's ally Richard Kilwington, Dean of St Paul's, has been proposed as FitzRalph's literary executor (Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 185, 453–4). For discussions of the contents of some of the sermons see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 182–237, 318–48, 409–19; Walsh, 'Irish Preacher'; Hammerich, 'FitzRalph and the Mendicants', pp. 29–41; Gwynn, 'Richard FitzRalph, Archbishop of Armagh'; and Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 123–51.
- 43 Gwynn, 'Sermon-Diary', p. 16; Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 186 n. 7; *Rosarium Theologie*, pp. 24, 72–3.
- 44 Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', p. 342. Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 131–51, discussed FitzRalph's polemics with reference to antifraternal tradition.
- 45 See Walsh, 'Archbishop FitzRalph', pp. 224–6 and cf. her account of the MS in 'Hardeby' (1970).
- 46 Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 413–15; 'Hardeby' (1970), pp. 186–95. The fullest study of his treatise is Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970, 1971). There is no edition; for the text the copy in Bod. Lib. MS Digby 113 ff. 1^r–117^r has been used for the present study.
- 47 See Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1971), p. 66; Walsh, 'FitzRalph and the Friars', p. 242 n. 62; and for a list of MSS see Little, *Grey Friars*, p. 240.
- 48 See Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1971), pp. 64, 69. Conway's *quaestiones* on the poverty question have been preserved in Bod. Lib. MS Rawl. G. 40 ff. 42c^r–48c^r.
- 49 Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, p. 132; Maidstone, *Protectorium Pauperis*, p. 139.
- 50 Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1971), p. 71 and n. 66. A medieval annotator in fifteenth-century MS Bodley 52 remarked beside a passage of *Filios Enutriui* (1328) by Jean d'Anneux 'nota contra fratres et precipue contra Conewey et eius opinionem', f. 183^r; for Jean d'Anneux and this treatise see Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 81–93.
- 51 Williams, ed., 'Protectorium Pauperis', p. 133. The *determinatio* is preserved in Bod. Lib. MS e. Mus. 94 ff. 5^r–8^v; for edition and discussion see Edden, 'Debate'; see also Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1971), pp. 64–5, 73–7. Towards the end of his life (1396) Maidstone seems to have been in favour at court; see Wright, *Political Poems and Songs*, vol. 1, pp. 282–300; Workman, *John Wyclif*, vol. 2, p. 249; and Williams, 'Two Notes'. Maidstone made an English version of the Penitential Psalms; see Edden, 'Richard Maidstone's Penitential Psalms'.
- 52 Emden, *Oxford*, vol. 1, p. 70; cf. Edden, 'Debate', pp. 114–15, who dated the debate 1384–92, probably before 1390.
- 53 Knighton, *Chronicon*, vol. 2, p. 174; W. R. Thomson, *John Wyclif*, p. 294.
- 54 Hudson, 'Lollardy', p. 271.
- 55 Hudson, 'Wycliffism', p. 68.
- 56 The Latin record of this sermon is preserved in Bodley 240, pp. 848–50; see Copeland, M.A. thesis 1938, pp. 178–9; Aston, "'Caim's Castles'", pp. 59–60; Little, *Grey Friars*, p. 84; and Hudson, 'Wycliffism'.

- 57 Hudson, 'Wycliffism', pp. 71–3.
- 58 For an edition and discussion see Eric Doyle, 'William Woodford's "De Dominio Civili Clericorum"', and also Catto, D.Phil. thesis 1969, pp. 169–226.
- 59 Date given by Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), pp. 227–8 (however, further investigation of date is necessary here; W. R. Thomson, *John Wyclif*, p. 41, said 'This *Defensorium* probably saw the light of day early in 1375', but the basis for this assertion is not clear, as no further evidence is adduced by Thomson that the work was issued as part of Woodford's conflict with Wyclif).
- 60 Marcett, *Uthred de Boldon*; the doctrinal aspects of this dispute were discussed by M. D. Knowles, 'Censured Opinions'; see also Forte, B.Litt. thesis 1947, vol. 1, pp. 123–43. Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 108–12, discussed this work in relation to the antifraternal tradition.
- 61 BN MS Lat. 3183 ff. 160^v–168^v. For a summary and discussion of this *quaestio*, *Utrum Paupertas Mendicitatis*, see Forte, Oxford B.Litt. thesis 1947, vol. 1, pp. 144–7. It seems to have been written as part of the conflict between the monks and the friars during the late 1360s, which focussed on both the poverty issue and the theological 'clear vision' issue (Forte, B.Litt. thesis 1947, vol. 1, pp. 123–43). BN MS Lat. 3183 is an English MS of the second half of the fourteenth century. It is an important collection of writings on themes associated with the poverty, jurisdiction and doctrinal disputes.
- 62 Trapp, 'Augustinian Theology', pp. 201–13, 235–9.
- 63 *De Substantialibus Regule Monachalis* and *De Perfectione Vivendi in Religione* are preserved in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 103, pp. 291, 310; for discussion see Pantin, 'Two Treatises', where they are dated 1374–6 on the basis of content (p. 382).
- 64 Pantin, 'Some Medieval English Treatises', pp. 198–9.
- 65 A study of the various versions and their contents has been made by Pantin, 'Some Medieval English Treatises'. Some of the material was printed by Pantin; *De Institutis Monachorum*, possibly by Uthred of Boldon, is printed in *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. 1, pp. xix–xxii from BL Cott. Vit. E 12. The earliest extant copy (1361–7), used for the present study because it includes material not in the later manuscripts, is in Vatican Lib. MS Reg. Lat. 127 ff. 164^v–173^v; for a summary of the contents of this MS see Pantin, 'Some Medieval English Treatises', pp. 190–4. The treatise has been associated with Joachism; see Reeves, *Prophecy*, p. 159, and Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, p. 160.
- 66 Studied and partly edited by Thompson, Ph.D. thesis 1936, these occur in Durham Cathedral MS iv 33, which Thompson used for his edition; *De Dotacione Ecclesie Sponse Christi* also occurs in MS Bodley 859 ff. 277^r–288^v, used for quotation in the present study (not noted in the *Summary Catalogue* entry but noticed by Pantin, *English Church*, p. 169).
- 67 Thompson thought that the *determinatio* and Uthred's treatises should be dated 1366–7 (Thompson, Ph.D. thesis 1936, vol. 1, pp. 16, 34–5), but Catto and Eric Doyle have proposed 1377 and 1374, respectively, for the *determinatio* (Catto, D.Phil. thesis 1969, p. 175; Eric Doyle, 'William Woodford's "De Dominio Civili Clericorum"', p. 50; and see further W. R. Thomson, *John Wyclif*, pp. 229–30 for date, context and MS). For Easton's contribution to the controversy, see Pantin, 'Adam Easton', and for Brinton see Devlin, *Thomas Brinton*, vol. 1, pp. xxviii–xxxi.
- 68 See Gradon, 'Langland', pp. 180–3.
- 69 The standard reference work is Workman, *John Wyclif*, and the standard source of information on his writings is W. R. Thomson, *John Wyclif*. Discussions of Wyclif's thought by Leff (*Heresy*, vol. 2, pp. 498–558), Robson (*Wyclif*) and Wilks

(‘*Reformatio Regni*’, ‘Royal Patronage and Anti-Papalism’ and ‘Predestination’) have been useful for the present study. For discussions of Wyclif’s part in the poverty controversy see Walsh, ‘Hardeby’ (1970), p. 258, (1971) pp. 26–7; Eric Doyle, ‘William Woodford’s “De Dominio Civili Clericorum”’, pp. 50–67; and Catto, D.Phil, thesis 1969, part 3. A detailed narrative of the cases against Wyclif is given in Dahmus, *Prosecution*. McFarlane, *John Wycliffe*, gave a narrative of Wyclif’s career and influence. Little, *Grey Friars*, pp. 81–8, summarised his antifraternalism (relying in part, however, on English writings which it now seems are unlikely to have been written by Wyclif himself). Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 152–82, gave an account of Wyclif’s antifraternalism based on more recent scholarship. Renna, ‘Wyclif’s Attacks on the Monks’, examined the relation between Wyclif’s antimonasticism and tradition. Hanrahan, ‘John Wyclif’s Political Activity’, examined the question of his links with secular political interests.

- 70 Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 459.
- 71 Cf. Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 460, and Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, p. 228.
- 72 W. R. Thomson, *John Wyclif*, p. 48; for MSS and the place of *De Civili Dominio* in Wyclif’s career see Thomson, *John Wyclif*, pp. 48–55.
- 73 It may have been the parliament of 1371 to which Wyclif referred in *De Civili Dominio*, when recounting an antipossessioner fable he claimed to have heard in parliament (Wyclif, *De Civili Dominio*, Book 2 vol. 2, p. 7), cf. Clarke, *Medieval Representation*, p. 31. For discussion of Wyclif’s possible involvement in this parliament see Hanrahan, ‘John Wyclif’s Political Activity’, and Holmes, *Good Parliament*, pp. 167–8.
- 74 Holmes, *Good Parliament*, pp. 168–9, but contrast Hanrahan, ‘John Wyclif’s Political Activity’, for a more cautious view.
- 75 McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, p. 394; Holmes, *Good Parliament*, pp. 166–7, 178–9.
- 76 McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, p. 396.
- 77 The scandal was triggered off by the violation of the Sanctuary by Buxhill, Keeper of the Tower, and fifty soldiers, in order to recover the escaped prisoners Haulay and Shakyl. Wyclif defended the crown’s part in the affair at the parliament in Gloucester three months later (October 1378) when the government hoped to negotiate a subsidy (Dahmus, ‘John Wyclif’, pp. 61–3).
- 78 Holmes, *Good Parliament*, p. 167; McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, p. 512.

2 The usurpation of priestly power and the transformation of an antifraternal satire

- 1 Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 f. 106^r beside C XXII 340 (B xx 340).
- 2 B xx 300–17.
- 3 For examples and discussion of this satirical tradition see Williams, ‘Chaucer’, pp. 511–12; Fleming, ‘*Summoner’s Tale*’, p. 693; Szittyá, ‘Antifraternal Tradition’, p. 305; Szittyá, ‘Friar as False Apostle’, pp. 43–4; and Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 57–61.
- 4 The Helmsley documents are in MS Bodley 158 ff. 142^v–145^r; see further Walsh, ‘Hardeby’ (1970), p. 224.
- 5 For the text of *Omnis Utriusque Sexus* see *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, vol. 2, cols. 887–8, and for a synopsis of the Lateran Council Decrees, Gibbs and Lang, *Bishops and Reform*, Appendix A. For accounts of the influence of the decrees, and of their transmission in episcopal legislation, see Pantin, *English Church*, chapter 9; Boyle, *Pastoral Care*, chapter 1: ‘Robert Grosseteste and the Pastoral Care’ (1976); and Gibbs and Lang, *Bishops and Reform*, pp. 105–73.

Notes to pages 17–20

- 6 Studies of the vast and varied genre of the pastoral manual with particular relevance for the *Piers Plowman* period include Pantin, *English Church*, chapter 9; Boyle, *Pastoral Care*, chapter 4: 'The *Oculus Sacerdotis* and some other works of William of Pagula' (1955); Boyle, D.Phil. thesis 1956, and Gillespie, D.Phil. thesis 1981, especially vol. 1, pp. 174–87.
- 7 Moorman, *Franciscan Order*, p. 11; G. R. Galbraith, *Dominican Order*, p. 35.
- 8 For a full account of the juridical controversy of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, see Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), pp. 238–45; this refers in detail to the series of papal bulls and decretals sought by both parties over the meaning of *Omnis Utriusque Sexus*. For the late thirteenth-century stage of the conflict see also Douie, 'Conflict', pp. 26–9, and for contemporary reverberations in England, see Copeland, M.A. thesis 1938, and 'Relations'.
- 9 For discussions of the theories of priestly power by which both sides claimed jurisdiction see Congar, 'Aspects Ecclésiologiques'; Dawson, 'William of Saint-Amour'; and Sikes, 'John de Pouilli'.
- 10 For accounts of the mid and late fourteenth-century developments of the conflict, and of its literature, see Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1971), pp. 30–83; Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, pp. 80–95; Williams, 'Relations'; Copeland, M.A. thesis 1938; Copeland, 'Relations'; Erickson, 'Fourteenth-Century Franciscans'; and Walsh, 'Archbishop FitzRalph', pp. 236–44.
- 11 See the charges made by Conway, *Defensio Religionis Mendicantium*, pp. 1416, 1333[1429], 1344[1440], and FitzRalph's defence on these points in *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, pp. 40, 48.
- 12 E.g. Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, p. 68, and cf. Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', pp. 315–16.
- 13 A principal source for the Augustinian theory of dominion was Giles of Rome, *De Ecclesiastica Potestate* (c.1302). An account of this theory and of its influence on later writings is given by Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, pp. 59–73; see also Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), pp. 251–2. For FitzRalph's debt to and use of the theory, see Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), pp. 251–4; Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 377; Hughes, Ph.D. thesis 1928, vol. 1, pp. 195–7; and Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, pp. 67–8. The reassessment of FitzRalph's theory of dominion begun in Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', has been followed for the account in chapter 3 of FitzRalph's interpretation of evangelical poverty, but Dawson's account of the place of this theory in FitzRalph's antifraternal campaign is different from that which will be advanced in the present chapter.
- 14 For the different classes of parish clergy see Pantin, *English Church*, pp. 27–9; and for the use of 'possessioners' to denote monks see David Knowles, *Religious Orders*, vol. 2, p. 65.
- 15 Powicke and Cheney, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 1255–63. See further Pantin, *English Church*, p. 160; Copeland, 'Relations', p. 34.
- 16 Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), p. 240.
- 17 Haren, D.Phil. thesis 1975, vol. 1, p. 297, and edition, vol. 2, p. 53. The *Memoriale Presbiterorum* may have been written in Avignon in 1344; it has a marked antimendicant bias which seems to anticipate, and may be related to, FitzRalph's case against the friars; see Pantin, *English Church*, p. 211; Haren, D.Phil. thesis 1975, vol. 1, pp. 22–34, 415–19; and see further below.
- 18 For 'spirituale' Bennett proposed a play on 'the two concrete senses: (i) ecclesiastical properties or dues, (ii) endowments (sc. 'that I, Wrath, provide')' (*B text*, p. 161, nn. 148–9). But although 'endowments' is an attractive suggestion, because it would add another irony, this meaning does not seem to be supported historically; see *OED*, 'spirituality', sense 2, and the example from Matthew,

- English Works of Wyclif*, p. 276: 'so pat alle clerkis lyue clenly on spirituale, as crist & his apostlis deden'. For the suggestion of a simpler play on 'church dues' and 'spirituality' see Schmidt, *B-Text*, p. 316, nn. 147–8.
- 19 For one tradition see Mann, *Chaucer*, pp. 23–4, and cf. B x 313–14.
- 20 See for example Bonaventure's *articulus* 'De Paupertate quoad Mendicitatem', p. 136, where '*Virgam non ferre*' is interpreted 'non esse sollicitum'.
- 21 CT D 1736–7; for the tradition see Fleming, '*Summoner's Tale*', p. 692.
- 22 CT A 495. Mann, *Chaucer*, p. 235 n. 22, noted the inversion of the 'fine horses' topic, but thought the description in this line 'prosaically realistic' (p. 60).
- 23 Pantin, *English Church*, pp. 159–60, 267.
- 24 Williams, 'Relations', p. 24.
- 25 For the London rectors' complaints see Powicke and Cheney, vol. 2, part 2, p. 1257; FitzRalph's *libellus* was issued in 1357 (Walsh, 'Archbishop FitzRalph', pp. 236–7, and for MSS see p. 236 n. 45). In MS Bodley 865 the *libellus* is at ff. 79^v–86^v; for the charge see f. 80^v.
- 26 *De Superstitione Pharisaeorum*, line 4. For the group of poems to which this belongs see Rigg, 'Latin Poems', pp. 106–9.
- 27 FitzRalph, *Unusquisque*, p. 60; FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 55.
- 28 CT D 1665–7; 1981–2161. Williams noted that the conflict over tithes here is an aspect of the clash over pastoral care (CT D 1312–33; Williams, 'Chaucer', pp. 510–11).
- 29 Oriel 79 f. 18^v beside B v 135. Its genetic partner CUL Ll 4 14 f. 21^r has 'Ira fferis' beside B v 135–7; here CUL Dd 1 17 f. 6^v has a *nota*.
- 30 For examples, and the collocation with 'beggars' see MED 'possessioner', n. (b). Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, vol. 2, p. 79 on B. v 144, proposed that 'possessioners' in the *Summoner's Tale* (CT D 1722) means 'beneficed clergy' as in *Piers Plowman*, but it seems doubtful whether the immediate context would support the narrower sense.
- 31 Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, pp. 114–40, especially pp. 128–9.
- 32 In *De Pauperie Salvatoris* FitzRalph answered the suggestion that prelates were comparable with 'barones' by claiming that they were not rich because they held wealth for the poor (Book 6, chapter 31, Bod. Lib. MS Auct. F. infra 1.2 f. 69^v); and cf. Brock, Ph.D. thesis 1953, p. lxxii.
- 33 FitzRalph, *Unusquisque*, pp. 56–7; see also Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 368–9.
- 34 In the friars' *libellus* of 1358, Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College MS 64 f. 119^{r-v}. Some of the *libellus* is at ff. 2^r–3^v (Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 130 n. 26).
- 35 For discussion of the word in Lollard writings see Hudson, 'Lollard Sect Vocabulary?', pp. 22–3.
- 36 In MS F the ambiguity is removed with rewriting; a few other MSS have 'ac' or 'and' for 'As'. Kane and Donaldson rejected the first line as scribal participation in criticism of the clergy (*B Version*, p. 193).
- 37 See for example B xv 491, 493, 509, 562–3, 609 (cf. C xvii 319), and 244 var. RF. Anima twice asserts that the pope makes prelates (493, 509); cf. the attack on simony and papal interference in the affairs of the English church in two antipapal documents in the parliament roll for 1376 (*RP* 50 Edw. III, vol. 2, pp. 337–9; and Holmes, *Good Parliament*, pp. 144–7). For extra examples in the C-text see C xvii 191–2, 'sethe 3e wilne pe name To be prelates' ('pastours', B xv 496), and 244. Cf. variation of 'prelas' with 'prestres' and 'cures' in certain MSS of the *Roman de la Rose* (recorded by Sullivan, *Romaunt of the Rose*, p. 196, in notes to lines 75–89).
- 38 BL Cott. Vesp. B xvi f. 50^v beside C xi 242 (B x 408).
- 39 B v 273a; cf. B xvii 310a.

- 40 William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, p. 23.
- 41 FitzRalph, *Mundati sunt Sacerdotes*, 'Two Sermons', ed. Gwynn, p. 65. FitzRalph associated friars with thieves in the first sermon of the sermon-diary, MS Bodley 144 f. 1^v:

... vnde dampnant se confessores religiosi siqui sunt et alij qui receptis paucis denariis non inducta restitutione hominem de furto aut de vsura aut de iniusto lucro proximi, absolucionem impendunt; sicuti absoluere hominem non possunt a delicto in proximum, nisi satisfactione premissa.

For the date of this sermon see Hammerich, 'FitzRalph and the Mendicants', p. 29, and Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 364–5.
- 42 Sikes, 'John de Pouilli'.
- 43 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, pp. 76–7.
- 44 FitzRalph, *Unusquisque*, pp. 62–4. Contrast Szittyá's interpretation of FitzRalph's use of Exod. 20:17 as a charge of theft based on a notion of a 'finite ecclesiastical economy' (*Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 139–40).
- 45 MS Bodley 144 f. 111^r (Third London Sermon); Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College MS 64 f. 4^v (Friars' *Appellacio*):

Item, quod fratres mendicantes huiusmodi priuilegia procurantes, in sic procurando peccaverunt mortaliter; quod peccatum continuant ipsa priuilegia retinendo et exsequendo.
- 46 MS Bodley 144 f. 119^r; FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, pp. 61–2.
- 47 Conway, *Defensio Religionis Mendicantium*, p. 1339 [1435].
- 48 Later examples are *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*, lines 468–71; (non-alliterative) *Jack Upland*, pp. 63–4; and *Friar Daw's Reply*, lines 577, 583. The Wycliffite English text *Jack Upland* is based on a series of antifraternal questions which were in circulation at least by the early 1390s, by which time, it appears, William Woodford had composed *Responsiones* to refute them (Eric Doyle, 'William Woodford's "De Civili Diminio"', p. 50 n. 1; Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), p. 227 n. 66). The form may have been a traditional one – as perhaps was the content; cf. Bonaventure's *Opusculum* XIII, a reply to forty-nine questions about friars. The dates of the *Jack Upland* version of the questions, and of the necessarily later *Reply* and *Rejoinder* are not at all clear; Lawton, 'Lollardy', pp. 790–1, dated the *Rejoinder* 1402–13 on the basis of internal evidence; cf. however Heyworth's discussion in his edition, pp. 9–19, where this latest work in the series is considered a holograph and accordingly dated on palaeographical grounds c.1450.
- 49 There is no historical study of the sacrament of penance for the later medieval period, but materials for the period before the Lateran Council of 1215 are provided in Watkins, *History of Penance*, and for the later period, notions about penance are discussed in Tentler, *Sin and Confession*. For the importance of Anselm (d.1109) and *Cur Deus Homo* see *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 'Atonement', p. 104; 'Penance', p. 1059; and 'Satisfaction', p. 1237. Hort, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 130–55, discussed late medieval notions of penance in relation to the poem.
- 50 For discussion and examples see Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, pp. 340–3.
- 51 B v 230–95.
- 52 For the sources and form of the quotation see Alford, 'Some Unidentified Quotations', p. 398, and for examples in penitential literature see Gray, 'Langland's Quotations from the Penitential Tradition'.
- 53 Simmons and Nolloth, *Lay Folks' Catechism*, p. 56.
- 54 Simmons and Nolloth, *Lay Folks' Catechism*, pp. 54–7. Pecham's *De Infirmatione Simplicium* was issued by the Provincial Council of Lambeth in 1281, and

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- seems to be a syllabus for basic religious instruction. Hudson, 'Lay Folks' Catechism', showed that the English text survived in many different forms, and that its relation with Thoresby's *Instructions*, modelled on Pecham's *De Informatione*, cannot simply have been one of translation and subsequent Wycliffite adaptation.
- 55 Thoresby became Chancellor in 1349, during which year there was an inquiry into the friars' property (Little, 'Royal Inquiry', p. 146). For Thoresby's appointment as Dean of Lichfield see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 250–1, and cf. Little, 'Royal Inquiry', p. 146, who found 'no personal connexion' between Thoresby and FitzRalph. Simmons and Nolloth quoted from later accounts of Thoresby's life where he is attributed with having written against the friars (*Lay Folks' Catechism*, pp. xxiv–xxv), but the evidence is late and unreliable. Further indication of a controversial context for the *Lay Folks' Catechism* is given by its later forms, in orthodox and Wycliffite versions or compilations (see Hudson, 'Lay Folks' Catechism').
- 56 Haren, D.Phil. thesis 1975, vol. 1, pp. 79–80. Haren noted the comparison with *Piers Plowman*.
- 57 Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, p. 131.
- 58 MS Bodley 144 ff. 92^v–94^v; the sermon then proceeds with the theme of dominion. Walsh did not make any comment on this opening to the series of antifraternal sermons in her discussion of them (*Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 415ff).
- 59 Leff, *Bradwardine*, p. 262.
- 60 MS Bodley 144 ff. 38^v–39^v.
- 61 Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 131–70; Robson, *Wyclif*, pp. 70–96; Leff, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 2–3, 138–72.
- 62 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 46.
- 63 FitzRalph, 'Bini Sermones', ed. Zimmerman, p. 183.
- 64 Haren, D.Phil. thesis 1975, vol. 1, pp. 343–4.
- 65 B v 198–259; 269 and var., printed Bennett, *B text*, v 274.
- 66 FitzRalph, *Unusquisque*, p. 64. For the tradition see Nelson, 'Usurer', pp. 111–12. Walsh took a different view, explaining the emphasis on usury as a theme appropriate for a merchant community (*Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 283ff, and for remarks on the state of the sermons see pp. 185–6, 234).
- 67 MS Bodley 144 f. 72^r:
 ... tria genera hominum scilicet vsurarii, falsidici et receptores furtorum et furum tanquam collectores tolneti diaboli fuit factus sermo moralis ...
 For the interpretation of 'collectores tolneti diaboli' see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 341.
- 68 MS Bodley 144 f. 1^v; see quotation above, p. 183 n. 41.
- 69 For the import of the gloss, that sin cannot go unpunished and that restitution is always required, see Pearsall, *C-text*, C vi 303a note *ad loc*.
- 70 Cf. the duties of bishops at B v 287–95, especially 292–5.
- 71 B xix 182–98; 258–9; 389–94a; xx 308, 320–1. At B xx 308 Kane and Donaldson (cf. *B Version*, p. 95) read 'pardon' from C xxii 308.
- 72 BL MS Cott. Vesp. B xvi f. 87^r beside C xxi 184 (B xix 185). Where previous comments have been made on the theme of restitution in *Piers Plowman*, it has usually been in connection with Matt. 18:28, as an aspect of debt. Although some of the examples of its use in the literature of the pastoral conflict have been noted (Frank, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 106–9; Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 130–2), its use in the poem has been accounted for in terms other than those of the conflict; Frank glossed it loosely as 'man's debt of love to God and to his neighbour' (p. 109); Bloomfield related it to the theme of justice in apocalyptic thought. Coleman, *Piers*

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- Plowman*, related Matt. 18:28 to medieval notions of natural and divine justice, but did not refer to the polemical context for these debates (p. 41). Stokes, *Justice and Mercy*, pp. 11–31, discussed the language of restitution and debt in the poem but concentrated on the ‘universality of significance’ of the antifraternalism (p. 11), and did not investigate the contemporary conflict. Gray, ‘Clemency of Cobblers’, saw Gloton’s vomiting as a figure for restitution.
- 73 B xvii 303–20.
 - 74 Baldwin, ‘Westminster Sanctuary’.
 - 75 *Anonimale Chronicle*, p. 123.
 - 76 Wyclif, *De Civili Dominio*, Book 2, vol. 2, pp. 23–4. Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, p. 224 n. 71, noted the shared use of Exod. 20:17 here and at B xx 279, but did not make the connection with the restitution issue as an aspect of the conflict over priestly power.
 - 77 Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, p. 224 n. 71, proposed the identification with Uthred.
 - 78 Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, p. 224 n. 71, noted the comparison with *Piers Plowman* but argued that the monastic position on clerical possessions is endorsed in the poem.
 - 79 Cf. A iv 126–36. Another antifraternal passage unique in Z is Z III 151–62 where Mede, in the presence of the king, blames Conscience for condoning the friars’ activities.
 - 80 The identification with St Richard of Chichester was tentatively proposed by Rigg and Brewer, *Z Version*, p. 76 n. 152. For St Richard of Chichester see *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 1185, and for his friendship with the friars *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 48, p. 203. In his study of all the known evidence for the cult of St Richard of Chichester, Jones concluded that it was ‘a small cult, mainly a local affair’ (Jones, ‘Cult of St Richard of Chichester’, p. 85).
 - 81 Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 452–6.
 - 82 Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 457 n. 20. Examples of references to St Richard in Lollard writings in English include Arnold, *English Works of John Wyclif*, vol. 3, p. 281; and Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, p. 128.
 - 83 *Chronicon Angliae*, Appendix, p. 400. This continuation of Higden’s *Polychronicon* was written in the reign of Richard II (1377–99); see Taylor, *Universal Chronicle*, pp. 180–1.
 - 84 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 180 f. 1^r, and see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 472–3 and frontispiece.
 - 85 Rigg and Brewer, *Z Version*, pp. 4–5. In his detailed review of this edition Kane questioned the basis for this conclusion about the date of Z (‘The “Z Version”’, p. 911). The present argument about the reference to St Richard would accord equally well with a later date (as the examples above show); see further in note 86.
 - 86 For the identification see Rigg and Brewer, *Z Version*, pp. 3–5, and for objections Kane, ‘The “Z Version”’, p. 911. Both Wells and Easton were opponents of Wyclif. Easton used the *De Pauperie Salvatoris* as a source of Wyclif’s theory of dominion. For sermons by Wyclif issued during the conflict with Wells see W. R. Thomson, *John Wyclif*, pp. 156–7. There are perhaps no significant implications in this interpretation of the St Richard line for the status of MS Bodley 851 and the date of composition of its text, as the MS is a copy of Z (Rigg and Brewer, *Z Version*, p. 30), and therefore the line could be a scribal addition; this might be supported by its odd alliteration. Although the form ‘a’, a form for unstressed ‘she’ here is as such characteristic of the West Midland language posited for the original, rather than the scribal East Midland language (Rigg and Brewer, *Z Version*, pp. 26, 115, 126) it could nevertheless be an imitative addition, or anterior

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- scribal insertion; however, Rigg and Brewer discount linguistic imitation (Rigg and Brewer, *Z Version*, pp. 26–7).
- 87 MS Bodley 865 f. 81^v.
- 88 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 42; cf. p. 46.
- 89 FitzRalph, *Unusquisque*, pp. 66–7. Cf. the brotherly relation between the tithe-paying Ploughman and the Parson in Chaucer's *General Prologue*, CT A 477–541.
- 90 FitzRalph, *Unusquisque*, p. 68, cf. B xi 73–7. The theme appears in the *Upland* series: *Jack Upland*, pp. 63–4; *Friar Daw's Reply*, lines 577ff.
- 91 MS Bodley 144 f. 119^f.
- 92 The line in Skeat follows B xi 67. Kane and Donaldson (*B Version*, p. 193) rejected the line as spurious on poetic grounds, explaining it as scribal participation in criticism of the clergy. There is no comparable C-text line. Cf. C xii 15ff.
- 93 B iii 35–75.
- 94 Kane and Donaldson follow the A-text and print 'baude' (B iii 46), attributing the B-text reading to scribal censorship (Kane and Donaldson, *B Version*, p. 88; cf. Schmidt, *B-Text*, p. 267, iii 46n).
- 95 Havelly, 'Chaucer's Friar', p. 339, commented on CT A 212–13 as the 'keynote' for 'harmonization of sexual and commercial motives' in the Huberd portrait, but did not remark the transformation of the tradition, and its significance.
- 96 For a detailed discussion of wordplay in these lines see Schmidt, '*Lele Wordes*', pp. 141–5. Schmidt noted the links with 2 Tim. 3, but did not mention the associated satirical and polemical tradition when he proposed that 'the confessional situation in xx 345–8' may have been suggested by 2 Tim. 3:6 (p. 145).
- 97 FitzRalph, *Unusquisque*, p. 65; *Defensio Curatorum*, p. 53; Fourth London Sermon, MS Bodley 144 f. 122^f. Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 280 n. 53, p. 283 n. 58, suggested that the physician image in *Piers Plowman* might mark FitzRalph's influence, but the image of the confessor as a physician was of course well established.
- 98 *Romaunt of the Rose*, lines 6379ff. Cf. *Sedens Super Flumina*, lines 61–3:
 Quere totam angliam; vix inuenietur
 Quin mariti femina fratri confessetur;
 Hoc est quod ecclesia scindit ...
 For *Sedens* see p. 196 n. 84 and for transmission and reception of the *Roman de la Rose* see p. 193 n. 39.
- 99 B xx 253–72.
- 100 William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, pp. 25–8:
 Nec debent noui Apostoli constitui in Ecclesia Dei, Cum ipsa Ecclesia, tam de Apostolis, id est, Episcopis, quam de aliis ministris, olim per Apostolos, & Sanctorum Patrum Concilia instinctu Spiritus Sancti, ad exemplar monstratum Moysi in monte Sina, diuinitus extiterit ordinata, vt dicit Beatus Dionysius in Ecclesiastica Hierarch. cap. 5. Cum igitur in Ecclesiastica Hierarchia; quae ad instar Coelestis Hierarchiae ordinata est, vt ibid. dicitur, non sint nisi duo ordines, scilicet, ordo perficientium, qui est superior, habens tres gradus, scilicet Episcopos, Presbyteros, & Diaconos, siue ministros; Et ordo perficiendorum, qui est inferior, habens similiter tres gradus, Viros, scilicet, Regulares, qui & ibi Monachi appellantur, & Fideles Laicos & Catechumenos ... Non est autem verisimile, quod predictam sacratissimam Hierarchiam liceat homini mortali immutare; precipue cum dicat Leo Papa 25. qu. 1. cap. Que ad perpetuam, Ea, quae ad perpetuam utilitatem generaliter instituta sunt, nulla debere commutatione variari. Et sic non potest Romanus Pontifex destruere, quod ab Apostolis & Prophetis decretum

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- est, alioquin errare conuinceretur, vt dicit Vrbanus Papa 25. q. 1. cap. sunt quidam.*
- 101 William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, pp. 24–5.
- 102 William of St Amour, *De Periculis* p. 26:
Item constat, quod omnibus illis, qui predicant ex potestate, debetur procuratio, siue sumptus, 1. Cor. 9. *Ordinauit Deus ijs, qui Euangelium annuntiant, de Euangelio viuere*; Ergo si infinitae personae habeant potestatem praedicandi in qualibet Ecclesia, quaelibet Ecclesia debebit infinitas procuraciones, quod est absurdum dictum ...
- 103 Schmidt's edition is quoted here in preference to Kane and Donaldson's because their semi-colon in the middle of B xx 266 prevents a reading of this line as a generalisation about the law. Moreover, it is hard to see what meaning 'Of lewed and of lered' could have when construed with lines 264–5 as in the Kane and Donaldson punctuation.
- 104 B xx 257–65.
- 105 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, pp. 59–60. Others who have remarked the similarity with *Piers Plowman* have interpreted it differently. See Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 145–6, and Frank, *Piers Plowman*, p. 110 n. 6. Szittyá, 'Antifraternal Tradition', pp. 308–12 pointed out the debt to the antifraternal tradition but commented on the topic as if the basis for its use had remained unchanged since its use in the *De Periculis*. Thus it forms an important part of Szittyá's argument that the antifraternal writing of the *Piers Plowman* period has a 'symbolic dimension' (p. 288) which originated in William's work.
- 106 Barthelemy, *Defensorium*, pp. 138, 167–73. For Barthelemy's life and career see Meersseman, 'La Défense', especially pp. 132–4, and Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1971), pp. 71–3. Walsh proposed a date of 1360 for the treatise (Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), p. 232; 'FitzRalph and the Friars', p. 242 n. 62). This split in the interpretation of Wisd. 11:20 is discernible in the *Jack Upland* series, where in *Friar Daw's Reply* Jack Upland's argument, based on Wisd. 11:20, that friars violate natural and divine law is rejected on the basis that harmonies discernible in nature have no relevance to the establishment of pastors by God and the church (*Jack Upland*, pp. 69–70; *Friar Daw's Reply*, lines 809–37).
- 107 BN MS Lat. 3183 f. 166^r:
... satis habeant vnde aliunde viuere et immo cauetur iam in ecclesia quod non admittantur in monasteriis plures regulares possessionati quam ad quot possunt bona monasteriorum sufficere.
- 108 Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 52. For examples of Deut. 23:25 in treatises on penance see Gray, 'Langland's Quotations from the Penitential Tradition'.
- 109 Sikes, 'John de Pouilli', p. 220.
- 110 Wilkins, *Concilia*, vol. 2, pp. 168–9. For Pecham's involvement in the late thirteenth-century conflict over pastoral care in England see Little, 'Measures' and *Grey Friars*, p. 75.
- 111 Conway, *Defensio Religionis Mendicantium*, p. 1419. See Kedar, 'Canon Law', for a discussion of cases in which bishops in the fourteenth century exerted greater control over preaching than was warranted by *Super Cathedram*.
- 112 Grandisson, *Register*, part 2, vol. 2, pp. 1108–9. For Grandisson's patronage of the young FitzRalph see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 64–70, and for his career in Paris see Walsh, 'Archbishop FitzRalph', p. 226.
- 113 In the beta MS tradition (Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, B xv 557–8a) the order is different; Schmidt rejected it as smoothing (*B-Text*, p. 291, xv 527n). The line could mean that bishops themselves steal confession from curates.

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- 114 B XIX 331, 346; XX 213, 316ff.
- 115 MS Bodley 144 f. 1^v.
- 116 CT A 225–32.
- 117 For earlier authorities for the sufficiency of contrition without oral confession see Watkins, *History of Penance*, vol. 2, pp. 744–5. For a brief discussion of the heretical Wycliffite position on this matter see Nolcken, *Rosarium*, pp. 105–6. For the theme in *Piers Plowman* see Frank, *Piers Plowman*, p. 99, Pearsall, *C-text*, C XIV 115–23n and Hort, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 148–55.
- 118 Cf. Pearsall, *C-text*, C XIV 115–23n.
- 119 Pantin, *English Church*, p. 192.
- 120 Thomas Aquinas, *Contra Impugnantes*, pp. A78–A79. Several English MSS of this work have survived; for a full list see pp. A14–A17, and for a discussion of the place of this work in the conflict at Paris, pp. A6–A13.
- 121 Wilkins, *Concilia*, vol. 2, p. 169.
- 122 MS Bodley 158 f. 143^r.
- 123 B XII 64–191.
- 124 See Williams, ‘Chaucer’, pp. 508–9; Szittyá, ‘Antifraternal Tradition’, pp. 294–9; and Mann, *Chaucer*, pp. 39–40, for the ‘rabbi’ (master) tradition, and for earlier examples of the use of Matt. 23 against clerics of other kinds.
- 125 On the fourteenth-century conflict and its thirteenth-century background, see Little, *Grey Friars*, pp. 37–43, and for this case and the previous history of this conflict in Oxford see Sheehan, ‘Religious Orders’, pp. 204–8. The statute is printed in *Munimenta Academica*, vol. 1, pp. 207–8.
- 126 B v 268; B XIII 184–201. B v 268 is ambiguous; conceivably it implies the *sale* by friars of books to share the profits accruing to their clients; for the implications see further below.
- 127 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 59.
- 128 CT D 2099–108; cf. Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, p. 128 (friars are ‘possessioners’ who, as FitzRalph says, have many books, hide them from seculars and ‘casten to distroie clergie of seculeris and trewe techynge of pe peple’); see also *Jack Upland*, p. 70, and for the Wycliffite tradition, the friars’ answer and the debt to FitzRalph see Rouse and Rouse, ‘The Franciscans and Books’. For prohibition of book-selling see Sheehan, ‘Religious Orders’, p. 209. It was surely not without irony that FitzRalph, in a sermon of 1341 to the Dominican friars at Avignon, described how Dominic sold his books and distributed his property among the poor (MS Bodley 144 f. 161^r), at a time when the order was engaged in conflict with Benedict XII over poverty and mendicancy. By contrast, Walsh, ‘Irish Preacher’, p. 411, interpreted this reference to Dominic as a sign that FitzRalph was still friendly then with the friars, concluding characteristically that his antifraternalism only emerged later (pp. 411–14).
- 129 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, pp. 55–8; cf. *Jack Upland*, p. 68. Szittyá, ‘Antifraternal Tradition’, p. 300, claimed the source of this topic was William of St Amour’s adaptation of Matt. 23:15; cf. Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 204–7. Sheehan, ‘Religious Orders’, gave an account of a conflict in Oxford and Cambridge c. 1365; friars had been forbidden to accept candidates under eighteen years old; they appealed to the pope and parliament; in 1365 Urban V intervened on their behalf.
- 130 Other examples are B Pro 62; XIII 25, 40 etc.; xv 377. Cf. examples in contemporary antifraternal writings, especially those in the *Canterbury Tales*, discussed by Williams, Mann and Szittyá (see above n. 124). The full

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significance of the topic in these later fourteenth-century examples was not, however, noted by these critics.

- 131 MS Bodley 144 ff. 56^r, 58^r, 81^r, 123^r, 237^r.
- 132 The C-text is less antisacerdotal here than the B-text, because it adds 'Ac 3if prestes doen here deuer wel we shal do pe better' (line 122) ('we *Christians* shall do better if even non-Christians may be saved'). The esoteric 'clear vision' allusion was lost in C-text MSS which read 'lengthening' rather than 'letyng of here lyf', as was first noticed by Russell, 'Salvation of the Heathen'.
- 133 For the documents see M. D. Knowles, 'Censured Opinions', and Uthred, *Contra Querelas Fratrum*. For the charge of Pelagianism against Uthred see M.D. Knowles, 'Censured Opinions', pp. 322–3, and cf. Adams, 'Piers's Pardon', p. 398 n. 70. This heresy had been opposed by Bradwardine in the earlier part of the century. Bradwardine based his counter-argument on a theory of divine determinism. In his view, God's grace was not given in response to human actions; hence salvation or damnation was predestined, for humans could do nothing which would inevitably merit grace (Leff, *Bradwardine*, pp. 127–39). For a discussion of the theme in *Piers Plowman* and its theological and philosophical background see Coleman, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 108–46.
- 134 M. D. Knowles however, in his discussion of the theological controversy, considered the friars' part in this dispute to be one of upholding orthodoxy disinterestedly ('Censured Opinions', p. 331), and Uthred's antifraternal polemic at the beginning and end of his defence 'lengthy but quite irrelevant passages of abuse of the friars' (p. 332). For Jordan's life and career, his petition against FitzRalph and his conflict with Uthred see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 437, 447; Marcett, *Uthred de Boldon*, pp. 49–56; Gwynn, 'Date of the B-text', pp. 19–24; and Forte, B.Litt. thesis 1947, vol. 1, p. 124.
- 135 Marcett noted the pun on 'Jordan' at B XIII 84 (C xv 92): 'I shal Iangle to pis Iurdan wip his luste wombe' (Marcett, *Uthred de Boldon*, pp. 62–3). The marginal annotations for the Great Doctor passage give no indication that it was read as an attack on an individual friar. This, however, might simply be an example of the early loss in the reading tradition of *Piers Plowman* of interest in, and understanding of, the more esoteric aspects of its anticlerical material. There is support both for the interpretation of 'Iurdan' as a pun, and for the likelihood of its being missed fairly early by *Piers Plowman* readers. Besides the allusion to FitzRalph in Bodley 851, already noted, there are examples both of naming opponents and of punning on names in the Latin satirical poetry which resulted from the conflicts with which Jordan was involved in the middle decades of the fourteenth century. The names of both Richard FitzRalph and Richard Kilvington were alluded to in the pro-fraternal poem *Quis Dabit Capiti Pelagus Aquarum*, pp. 316–17, while the minorite friar Richard Tryvyttram made an English pun on the name of Uthred (MS 'Owtrede') to characterise him as 'sine consilio' in *De Laude*; ed. Rigg, D.Phil. thesis 1965, vol. 1, p. 130, lines 461–4, and for discussion of these poems see vol. 2, pp. 330–46. Jordan's name probably became less well known after the dispute with Uthred, 1366–7; Gwynn, 'Date of the B-text', p. 23, corrected Marcett's claim that he left England in 1378 and was active ten years later; there are no records of him after the Uthred affair. Gwynn suggested that his absence from the controversial Great Council of 1373 (dated 1374 by Gwynn) in which Uthred was involved might indicate that he was dead by then.
- 136 See Gillespie, D.Phil. thesis 1981, vol. 1, pp. 27–47; 120–70; Hudson, 'Lay Folks' Catechism'; and for a recent approach to the wide and complex subject of lay

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- literacy see Aston, 'Devotional Literacy', in *Lollards*, pp. 101–33. MSS of devotional and religious manuals written in English are listed in Jolliffe, *Check-list*.
- 137 Lawton, 'Unity'; Minnis, 'Langland's Ymaginatif'; neither mentions the anticlerical implications of this aspect of the poem.
- 138 Examples include the following: in B xi (C xii) Oriel 79 has 'ffreris' beside B xi 54, 63, 70 (ff. 43^r, 43^v); CUL Ll 4 14 has 'ffreris' beside B xi 54 and 'ffrere' beside B xi 63 (f. 49^v); CUL Dd 1 17 has a *nota* beside B xi 68 (f. 14^r); Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 f. 53^v has 'notate hic freris' beside C xii 18 (not in B). In the final passus, Bod. Lib. Digby 102 has *notas* beside C xxii 282 (B xx 283) and C xxii 332 (B xx 332) (ff. 96^r, 96^v); Oriel 79 has 'Schrifte' beside B xx 306 (f. 87 [91]^r), 'ffrere flaterer' beside B xx 315 (f. 87[91]^r), 'ffrere leche' beside B xx 338 (f. 87 [91]^v), 'ffrere confessour' beside B xx 362 (f. 88[92]^r); CUL Ff 5 35 has a *nota* beside C xxii 315 (B xx 315) (f. 151^r). For annotation here in Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 see above p. 180 n. 1. Oriel 79 has 'how freris shryuen folk' beside the Mede–friar sequence (Oriel 79 f. 10^r beside B iii 37; beside C iii 38 (B iii 35) Bod. Lib. Douce 104 f. 11^v has 'nota de frerys pat bepe confessours'; Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 f. 11^r has here 'a comfessour as a frere comforted Mede and sayde as 3e may rede'; TCD MS 212 f. 10^r has a *nota*.
- 139 B-text MSS Oriel 79 f. 52^r and CUL Ll 4 14 f. 60^r have 'ffreris' beside B xiii 65, 'Doctours of freris' and 'Doctouris of ffreris' beside B xiii 90, ff. 52^v and 60^v respectively, and *notas* beside B xiii 70, 73a, ff. 52^r and 60^v respectively. Among the C-text MSS, Bod. Lib. MS Douce 104 f. 67^v has 'be war of fals freris' and a picture of a friar beside the 'Periculum est in falsis fratribus' passage (C xv 76–86) (B xiii 69–78) and BL Cott. Vesp. B xvi f. 62^r has 'contra fratres', while Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 f. 64^r has 'notate fratres' at the beginning of the episode.
- 140 Oriel 79 f. 18^v beside B v 135–7; CUL Ll 4 14 f. 21^r beside B v 135–7; Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 f. 30^r beside C vii 30 (B v 415); CUL Dd 3 13 f. 27^v has a *nota* beside C vii 28 (B v 413) (sloth); CUL Dd 1 17 has *notas* beside B v 137 (wrath) and B v 265 (Repentance on friars and restitution, ff. 6^v, 7^r). Examples of MSS in which some or all of the sins' names are marked are Nat. Lib. Wales 733B (A-text with C-text continuation); Huntington Lib. MS HM 128 (B-text); Cambridge, Newnham College MS 070 (Yates-Thompson) (B-text); Cambridge, Trinity College MS B 15 17 (B-text); Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 293 (C-text); London Univ. Lib. S.L.v.17 (C-text); BL Addit. 10574 ('mixed' text).
- 141 Bod. Lib. MS Eng. Poet. a. 1 f. 1^r (cf. A. I. Doyle, 'Shaping', p. 330); *Piers Plowman* (A-text) is on folios ccxciiij and following. This large, beautifully produced manuscript, written c. 1390–1400 (A. I. Doyle, 'English Books', p. 167), includes prayers, hymns and other devotional and instructional material, mostly in English. It is very similar to the Simeon MS (BL Addit. 22283); see A. I. Doyle, 'Shaping'. Unfortunately the intended and actual medieval owners of Vernon are not clear. A. I. Doyle, 'English Books', p. 167, detected 'evidence that an armigerous owner or donor was anticipated' but said other evidence suggests it 'may have gone to a religious community'.

3 Poverty: an old controversy and a new polemic

- 1 See Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, pp. 31–67, for an account of Francis's conversion to, and understanding of, evangelical poverty. The quotation is from the epilogue to the 1223 Rule, quoted by Lambert, p. 54 n. 4.
- 2 The conflict over Franciscan poverty is a subject of immense complexity, with a

- vast literature. Particularly useful for this study have been Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*; Douie, *Nature and Effect*; Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, pp. 51–255; Moorman, *Franciscan Order*; and Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph'. Fleming, *Franciscan Literature*, pp. 73–109, gave a survey of some of the major Franciscan writings on poverty.
- 3 Coleman, 'The Two Jurisdictions'.
 - 4 Nevertheless, the following have given useful accounts of poverty in *De Pauperie Salvatoris*: Mathes, 'Poverty Movement' (1969), pp. 15–30; Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), pp. 251–4, (1971) pp. 5–29; Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 387–405; Hughes, Ph.D. thesis 1928, vol. 1, pp. 173–89; Brock, Ph.D. thesis 1953, pp. liv–lxxii.
 - 5 For Bonaventure's account of Franciscan poverty see Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', pp. 317–21; Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, pp. 83–100; Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, pp. 126–48; and on Bonaventure generally, see Douie, 'St. Bonaventura's Part in the Conflict between the Seculars and the Mendicants at Paris', and Moorman, *Franciscan Order*, pp. 140–54. The first and third *articuli* are in BN MS Lat. 3183 ff. 147^v–154^v; cf. Bonaventure, *Opera Omnia*, vol. 5, p. xv; Maidstone's citation is in the *Protectorium Pauperis*, p. 139.
 - 6 For *Exiit qui seminat* see *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, vol. 2, cols. 1109–21.
 - 7 Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, pp. 100–39; Douie, *Nature and Effect*, pp. 9–10.
 - 8 Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', pp. 324–7; Douie, *Nature and Effect*, pp. 153–61; Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, pp. 208–45.
 - 9 Douie, *Nature and Effect*, pp. 156–60; Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', pp. 324–6.
 - 10 Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, pp. 60ff; Wilks, 'Predestination', pp. 229–31; Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', pp. 322–3.
 - 11 This was the subject of Book Two of *De Pauperie Salvatoris*; the basic thesis was summarised and defended in the London Sermons, as in the following extract from the Second London Sermon, MS Bodley 144 ff. 98^v–99^r:

... quod dominus noster Ihesus Cristus in conversacione sua tota in terra pauper fuit in nostra natura et nunquam diues secundum legem vie istius. Ista conclusio suadetur per certa principia. Primum est quod Deus dedit Ade, nostro primo parenti, in sua origine pro se et sua iusta progenie vnum dominium rerum omnium ad suam mortalitatem supportandum hic inferius creatarum ... Secundum principium fuit quod si Adam et omnes eius posterius innocentiam conservassent, nullus eorum habuisset in rebus aliud dominium aut aliud ius vtendi quam originale dominium ... Tercium principium est quod istud originale rerum dominium, si Adam et sui posterius innocentiam tenuissent, habuissent in singulis hominibus sibi conuenientem possessionem naturalem qua nullus hominum vltra sibi acomoda possessione propria possedisset.
 - 12 Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', pp. 325–6.
 - 13 For FitzRalph's use of the theory of dominion see Betts, 'Richard FitzRalph'; Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, pp. 67ff; Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 377–405; Wilks, 'Predestination', pp. 229–30; Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph'.
 - 14 See Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 373.
 - 15 Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), pp. 201–2.
 - 16 Catto, D.Phil. thesis 1969, pp. 192–6; Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 410 n. 14.
 - 17 The friars' *Appellacio* has been preserved in Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College MS 64 ff. 4^{r–v}. It was drawn up after a meeting of representatives of all four mendicant orders at the Franciscans' London headquarters, and delivered to FitzRalph on 10 March 1357 (Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 416–17). At Avignon FitzRalph was opposed by the procurators-general of the four mendicant orders at the curia, and

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- by English friars including representatives of all the four orders, who made up a delegation to the pope in 1358 (Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 427, 437). For an account of the case and the controversy at Avignon see Walsh, 'Archbishop FitzRalph'.
- 18 Bod. Lib. MS e. Mus. 94 f. 8^v: 'sicut vnus sic omnium quatuor ordinum est mendicitas approbata' (Maidstone's *Determinatio* against Ashwardby); cf. Edden, 'Debate', p. 133.
 - 19 Walsh, in *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 370, 373, commented on this as 'a tendency to argue from a literal interpretation of the original rule of St Francis, regardless of . . . the different constitutions of the other mendicant orders' (p. 370).
 - 20 Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', p. 343. Dawson did not illustrate this in detail, but it is confirmed by the friars' polemics, although the full history of the friars' response is unclear. Particularly helpful would be a study of the response by FitzRalph's Franciscan opponent Roger Conway. Dawson noted his *Defensio Religionis Mendicantium* (Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', p. 342 n. 75) but more relevant for the poverty dispute are his three *quaestiones* on poverty and dominion preserved in Bod. Lib. MS Rawl. G. 40 ff. 42c^r–48c^r.
 - 21 See Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', pp. 318–19.
 - 22 The *Quaestio Utrum Perfeccior sit Ordo Mendicantium uel Possessionatorum* is preserved in Vatican Lib. Reg. Lat. 127 f. 179^v, and therefore must date before 1361–7, when this MS was made; see further Pantin, 'Some Medieval English Treatises', and for a partial edition see Appendix 1, part 2, pp. 212–14. For the case of the Austin friars see V. H. Galbraith, 'Articles', who prints the documents – preserved, significantly, in a Benedictine cartulary from Bury St Edmunds – and see also Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, pp. 212–16.
 - 23 Wyclif, *De Civili Dominio*, *passim*, especially Book 1, vol. 1, pp. 1–2, 38–62, 265–70; Book 2, vol. 2, p. 18; Book 3, vol. 4, p. 460; and for discussion see Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1971), p. 26; Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 2, pp. 527–31; Wilks, 'Predestination', pp. 229–36.
 - 24 Wyclif, *De Civili Dominio*, Book 2, vol. 2, p. 7.
 - 25 Little, *Grey Friars*, pp. 81–2 n. 7; Clarke, *Medieval Representation*, p. 30; Catto, 'Alleged Great Council'. The account of the Council appears in the pro-Franciscan continuation of the *Eulogium Historiarum*, vol. 3, pp. 337–9, written c. 1397 (here the Council is wrongly dated 1374; see Catto, 'Alleged Great Council'). Besides Uthred and Mardisley, Thomas Ashbourne, who may have been one of the protagonists at the 1371 parliament, was present.
 - 26 Woodford, *De Dominio Civili Clericorum*, *passim*; for discussion see Eric Doyle, 'William Woodford's "De Dominio Civili Clericorum"', and Catto, D.Phil. thesis 1969, pp. 169–96, and for the contrast between Woodford's and Mardisley's positions cf. Catto, D.Phil. thesis 1969, pp. 196–8.
 - 27 V. H. Galbraith, 'Articles'.
 - 28 Walsh, 'Archbishop FitzRalph', p. 227.
 - 29 Walsh, 'Manuscripts', p. 74. Noting similarities with radical Franciscan thought in some of FitzRalph's writings, Walsh nonetheless argued that FitzRalph remained a possessioners' author for later readers ('Archbishop FitzRalph', pp. 231, 239).
 - 30 'Heu! Quanta Desolatio Anglie Prestatur', ed. Wright, *Political Poems and Songs*, vol. 1, p. 259.
 - 31 Adams, 'Need', especially pp. 288–91; Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 82, 96–7, 136, 148; Frank, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 114ff; Shepherd, 'Poverty'; Gradon, 'Langland', p. 203; Pearsall, *C-text*, C xii 98n, C xiii 79n. Contrast Aers, 'Poverty'; Bourquin, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 693–736; and Burdach, *Der Dichter des Ackermann aus Böhmen*, pp. 273ff, who noted Franciscan elements but did not suggest that

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- irony was involved. A Ph.D. thesis by Levy (1976) on the 'concept of poverty' in *Piers Plowman* gives only cursory treatment to the contemporary conflict.
- 32 Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College MS 64 f. 4^r.
 - 33 MS Bodley 144 f. 115^r.
 - 34 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 80; cf. pp. 39–40.
 - 35 Cf. Luke 18:22.
 - 36 Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, p. 59; Bonaventure, 'De Paupertate quoad Abrenuntiationem', p. 125.
 - 37 BN MS Lat. 3183 f. 160^v.
 - 38 Bonaventure, 'De Paupertate quoad Abrenuntiationem', p. 128; Pecham, *Tractatus Pauperis*, p. 24; William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, p. 49; *De Validis Mendicantibus*, MS Bodley 52 f. 140^v; Maidstone, *Protectorium Pauperis*, pp. 147–8; FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 92. For Pecham's part in the poverty dispute see Coleman, 'The Two Jurisdictions'. There is no edition of *De Validis Mendicantibus*, but it was widely known in medieval times. Besides the copy in MS Bodley 52 ff. 140^v–145^v, where the work is attributed to a Master Thomas de Wilton, there are four other MSS known, and excerpts in two others (see Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 93–9, 115–16).
 - 39 William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, pp. 49–50; *Roman de la Rose*, lines 11345–50. With what Jean de Meun called the Faus Semblant Chapter (cf. Badel, *Roman*, p. 207), the *Roman de la Rose* provided an important channel by which the satire and polemic of the Parisian secular clergy, especially William of St Amour, became widely known and much used by satirists. Badel's work on reception (*Roman*, pp. 207–62) suggests the development of several traditions, including continued interest in the antifraternal dimension indicated by scribal interpolations (pp. 209–10), notably the material satirising the friars' abuse of *Omnis Utriusque Sexus* which appears in several MSS and in the English translation (*Romaunt of the Rose*, lines 6361–472; French text parallel). Chaucer's debt to Faus Semblant in his depiction of the friar in the *Summoner's Tale* and of the Pardoner is widely recognised; recently his debt in the *Summoner's Tale* specifically to the 'apocryphal chapter' on *Omnis* has also been proposed (Fleming, 'Anticlerical Satire', p. 15, referring to CT D 2094–8). Badel did not discuss reception in English literature. For commentary on the Faus Semblant Chapter see Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 186–90.
 - 40 MS Bodley 144 f. 99^r; cf. f. 97^r, and FitzRalph, *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, Book 5, chapters 20–3, Bod. Lib. MS Auct. F. infra 1.2 ff. 55^r–56^v and *passim*, and see Mathes, 'Poverty Movement' (1969), pp. 15–30; Brock, Ph.D. thesis 1953, pp. lx–lxviii.
 - 41 FitzRalph, *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, Book 6, chapter 17, Bod. Lib. MS Auct. F. infra 1.2 f. 63^r:
... istum quantum gradum credimus omnibus arciozem, et esse gradum paupertatis artissimum, qui a voluntate poterit sancte ad perpetuo observandum assumi, et reducit hominem quantum permittunt miseria huius exilii et carnis corruptio ad condicionem sue institutionis primarie.
See further Mathes, 'Poverty Movement' (1969), pp. 16–23; Brock, Ph.D. thesis 1953, pp. lxi–lxvi.
 - 42 FitzRalph, *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, Book 6, chapter 5, Bod. Lib. MS Auct. F. infra 1.2 f. 58^v:
... set dixit, 'veni et sequere me', scilicet vitam quam teneo et tu tene, nec usquam Christus expressit quod ipse viam tenuit aut seruauit talis aut altissime aut artissime paupertatis ut estimo ...

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- On FitzRalph's argument here see Mathes, 'Poverty Movement' (1969), p. 17, and Brock, Ph.D. thesis 1953, p. lxii.
- 43 Maidstone, *Protectorium Pauperis*, p. 147. For discussion of poverty vocabulary in Latin patristic writings and other examples of 'pauper'/'mendicus' variation see Leclercq, 'Origines', pp. 38–41.
 - 44 Adams, 'Need', p. 291 and n. 35, noted the link here between 'misquotation' of Prov. 30:8 in *Piers Plowman* and in Maidstone's *Protectorium Pauperis*, but interpreted it differently. He treated it as an example of one of 'a few potentially radical statements about poverty' in *Piers Plowman*, explaining this as part of the 'experience of finding truth'. For another example of the 'misquoted' Prov. 30:8 in a polemical text see *Dives and Pauper*, 'Holy Pouert', chapter 5, pp. 59–60. *Dives and Pauper* is an early fifteenth-century text probably written by a friar, very possibly a Franciscan; see Hudson and Spencer, 'Old Author'.
 - 45 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 103 p. 313, cf. Pantin, 'Two Treatises', p. 375.
 - 46 Oriel 79 f. 45^v, CUL Ll 4 14: 'War munkes and channonys', f. 52^v beside B XI 276.
 - 47 Bonaventure, 'De Paupertate quoad Abrenuntiationem', pp. 133–4.
 - 48 Ps. 37 [36]:25 appears in MSS O and C² after B XI 279. Kane and Donaldson argued for a genetic relationship between O and C² at this point in the poem (Kane and Donaldson, *B Version*, pp. 22–4, 37); if they are right then this is evidence for a tradition of reading Ps. 37 [36]:25 in association with these lines rather than examples of independent insertions of the text. The same text occurs at B VII 89, in a similar thematic context.
 - 49 Bonaventure, 'De Paupertate quoad Abrenuntiationem', p. 125.
 - 50 Pointlasne, *De Renuntiantibus*. For Pointlasne see Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour*, pp. 102–3, and Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', p. 229 n. 10, who argued that *De Renuntiantibus* is an abbreviation of Bonaventure's 'De Paupertate quoad Abrenuntiationem'.
 - 51 Bod. Lib. MS Rawl. G. 40 f. 46^v.
 - 52 Richard FitzRalph, *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, Book 6, chapter 5, using the interpretation of John XXII in *Quoniam vir reprobis*, Bod. Lib. MS Auct. F infra 1.2 f. 58^v:
... istud dictum uariis modis affirmet posse sane intelligi, quoniam res temporales ut dicit possunt relinqui quoad curam, quoad affectionem, seu abdicacione domini, vel potest intelligi dicit ipse 'relinquimus omnia' preter necessaria ...
 - 53 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 103 pp. 313–14 (*De Perfectione Vivendi*); Vatican Lib. Reg. Lat. 127 f. 166^v (Monk of Bury's Treatise).
 - 54 Augustine, *De Opere Monachorum*, cols. 549–50 and *passim*.
 - 55 Bonaventure, 'De Paupertate quoad Abrenuntiationem', p. 126; 'Utrum Pauperes Validi', p. 158.
 - 56 William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, pp. 48–9.
 - 57 FitzRalph, *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, Book 6, chapters 13–14, Bod. Lib. MS Auct. F. infra 1.2 ff. 61^v–62^r.
 - 58 B VII 120–35; B XIV 29–82. For discussion of the authorities used in Pacience's speech see Alford, 'Haukyn's Coat'. In a recent discussion of the quotations in the pardon passus Allen, 'Langland's Reading', proposed that their source was Hugh of St Cher on the Psalter. Not finding Matt. 6:25 there, he proposed that it was suggested by a cross-reference to Matt. 6:28 in Hugh's gloss on Luke 16 (p. 346 n. 10 and p. 353) – apparently unaware of the traditional, controversial, exegesis which will be discussed here.
 - 59 Jordan of Saxony, *Vitasfratrum*, pp. 251–2. Jordan of Saxony, also known as Jordan of Quedlinburg, was Provincial of the Saxon-Thuringian Province of the

Order of the Hermits of St Augustine (see the edition of *Vitasfratrum* by Arbesmann and Hümpfner, pp. xi–xxiii). His *Liber Vitasfratrum*, completed in 1357, was addressed to the order as a guide to correct observance, and probably as a response to FitzRalph's antimendicant attacks; see Mathes, 'Poverty Movement' (1969), pp. 79–110; Arbesmann and Hümpfner, p. lii. Although the only English MS dates from the seventeenth century (see list in Arbesmann and Hümpfner, pp. lvi–lxi) Jordan's work was used as an authority by fellow-Augustinian Geoffrey Hardeby (Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), p. 175 and n. 146; p. 201), which confirms the influence of the work. Hardeby's interest can perhaps be explained on the grounds that Jordan, unlike earlier and more illustrious thinkers from his order, had shown how observance of the Augustinian Rule might be defended against the new polemic as a life of poverty with communal possessions, modelled on the apostolic community.

- 60 B XIV 66–8 (1 Kings 17:1); Bonaventure, 'De Paupertate quoad Mendicitatem', p. 138; CT D 1890–2.
- 61 Kane and Donaldson, *B Version*, p. 193, included the line among their 'few absolutely conjectural exclusions'.
- 62 Cf. A VIII 111–12 and see Kane, *A Version*, p. 451 n. 112, for discussion of the MSS here.
- 63 *Wycliffite Bible*, early version, Matt. 6:25. For other examples see *MED*, 'bisi', adj., sense 4.
- 64 Cf. Schmidt, *B-Text*, vi 248–9; see Kane and Donaldson, *B Version*, p. 89, and on 'it als', p. 85, and with this point cf. Godden, 'Plowmen and Hermits', p. 135.
- 65 C VIII 262ff.
- 66 B XI 248–9.
- 67 B XI 185–96.
- 68 Maidstone, *Protektorium Pauperis*, pp. 135–6.
- 69 Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College MS 64 f. 4^r.
- 70 MS Bodley 144 ff. 102^v, 116^r; FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 88.
- 71 MS Bodley 52 f. 144^v. Szittyta accepted the attribution in this MS of the *quaestio* to Thomas de Wilton who flourished in the early fourteenth century; if the attribution is correct then there can be no question of a debt here to the later FitzRalph. However, the authorship given in Bodley 52 is not secure: Wilton is not known otherwise as an antifraternal polemicist (Szittyta, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 95) and the MS said by Szittyta to be the earliest (Bod. Lib. MS Rawl. A 273; *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 95 n. 65) is datable from contents at least as late as the mid fourteenth century.
- 72 BN MS Lat. 3183 f. 165^r; for discussion of the argument in Lollard writings see Aston, "'Caim's Castles'", pp. 49, 62, 65 and nn. 22, 89, 91.
- 73 Bod. Lib. MS e. Mus. 94 ff. 5^r–8^v. Cf. Edden, 'Debate', p. 120 and Maidstone, *Protektorium Pauperis*, pp. 135–44.
- 74 Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, p. 39.
- 75 Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', p. 325.
- 76 Burr, 'Correctorium Controversy', p. 338.
- 77 Examples of the association of 'poverty' with 'patience' are B XI 257, 263; XIV 102, 215, 218, 220, 260, 272, 275, 285, 317; C XII 175; XIII 98. For many examples of the 'Paupertas' quotation see Alford, 'Some Unidentified Quotations', p. 396.
- 78 Maidstone, *Protektorium Pauperis*, pp. 153, 147.
- 79 Bod. Lib. MS e. Mus. 94 f. 5^v (Maidstone's *Determinatio*); cf. Edden, 'Debate', p. 123. It is clear however, from the beginning of the *Determinatio*, that Ashwardby spoke in the schools too (f. 5^r).

- 80 FitzRalph, *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, Book 6, chapters 1–2, Bod. Lib. MS Auct. F. infra 1.2 ff. 57^r–58^r:

‘Inops’ enim proprie appellatur qui opibus est priuatus; ‘mendicus’, qui ob opum destinum [?] defectum] compellitur mendicare; ‘egenus’, qui propter opum carenciam artatur ut egeat ... set ‘pauper’ proprie dicitur – ut recte dixisti – qui circa diuicias parum potest ... vnde non omnis ‘pauper’ est ‘mendicus’, ‘egenus’, aut ‘inops’. (f. 57^v)

Cf. Mathes, ‘Poverty Movement’ (1969), p. 16; Brock, Ph.D. thesis 1953, p. lxi. For the traditional etymologies of these terms see Leclercq, ‘Origines’, pp. 38–41.

- 81 Kane and Donaldson argued on textual grounds that the last two passus of the B-text were never revised for the C-text (*B Version*, p. 124).
- 82 Pointlasne, *De Renuntiantibus*, p. 378; Bonaventure, ‘De Paupertate quoad Abrenuntiationem’, p. 125. Uthred of Boldon, *De Dotacione Ecclesie Sponse Christi*, MS Bodley 859 f. 278^{r-v}:

Adeo quod cuidam scribe venienti sibi et dicenti propter lucrum, et mundi cupiditatem, vt dicunt doctores: ‘Magister, sequar te quocunque ieris’. Ihesus respondit, ‘Vulpes foueas habent et volucres celi nidos, filius autem hominis non habet vbi capud suum reclinet’, patet Matt. 8 et Luc. 9. Set sacerdotes et Leuite Aronitici et legalos [?]legales] habuerunt non solum in possessionibus inter fratres suos vbi capita sua reclinarent, set etiam 48 vrbes ad habitandum, et suburbana earum, ad sua pecora depascenda, vt ostensum est superius.

Cf. Thompson, Ph.D. thesis 1936, vol. 1, p. 67 and text, vol. 2.

- 83 FitzRalph, *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, Book 6, chapter 20, Bod. Lib. MS Auct. F. infra 1.2 f. 64^v:

... unde videtur quod nullius habitacionis proprietatem habuit singularem, nec proprietatem communem cum aliis alicuius habitacionis, in qua caput suum poterat reclinare, quoniam in domo communi sibi et aliis caput suum poterat, sicut in domo propria reclinare, sicut faciunt religiosi uiri communem vitam agentes.

Cf. Mathes, ‘Poverty Movement’ (1969), p. 19.

- 84 *Sedens Super Flumina*, lines 151–6. *Sedens Super Flumina* is preserved in the early fifteenth-century MS Digby 98 (an MS with Wycliffite associations; Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 193–4), but this poem may be related to the earlier pro-fraternal poem with the ‘o and i’ refrain *Quis Dabit Meo Capiti Pelagus Aquarum*, which denounces FitzRalph and his ally Kilwington; see Szittyá, “‘Sedens Super Flumina’”. Wyclif quoted from the poem in a sermon c.1380 (Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 193).

- 85 Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 277. The similarity of *Exiit qui seminat* to Nede’s speech was noted by Gradon, ‘Langland’, p. 203.

- 86 FitzRalph, Second London Sermon, MS Bodley 144 ff. 103^v–104^r:

Respondeo, siquis necessitatem habeat non prouenientem ex culpa, non tunc rem sibi necessariam proximi sui cupit set suam, cum ex eo casu id quod necessarium extat ei de possessis a proximo debeatur sibi, de lege Dei et hominum. Non autem est ita cum nulla adest necessitas, lege iusta hominum prohibente; aut si illa responsio non satis logica vobis appareat, dici potest quia casus necessitatis non venit sub lege set intelligitur a lege exceptus.

Cf. Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 269–70.

- 87 Wyclif, *De Civili Dominio*, Book 2, vol. 2, p. 7.

- 88 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 84.

- 89 *De Blasphemia*, pp. 412–15. See Aston, “‘Caim’s Castles’”, pp. 58–9, for the possible attribution of this Wycliffite treatise to Wyclif himself, and possible date before the Blackfriars Council of 1382. See also Little, *Grey Friars*, p. 82.

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- 90 Maidstone, *Protectorium Pauperis*, p. 156; cf. his *Determinatio*, Bod. Lib. MS e. Mus. 94 ff. 7^v–8^r.
- 91 Maidstone, *Determinatio*, Bod. Lib. MS e. Mus. 94 f. 8^r:
 ... non solum in necessitate extrema set etiam in necessitate oportuna et
 proficua licitum est fratribus mendicare ...
 Cf. Edden, 'Debate', p. 132.
- 92 V. H. Galbraith, 'Articles'; Wyclif, *De Civili Dominio*, Book 2, vol. 2, p. 7; cf. Clarke, *Medieval Representation*, p. 31.
- 93 Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1971), p. 34.
- 94 *Friar Daw's Reply*, lines 698–714. Woodford, *De Dominio Civili Clericorum*, pp. 77–8, used the text in support of his claim that Christ had civil dominion, even though he admitted that it meant that Christ had a house on the basis of natural dominion.
- 95 Schmidt, *B-Text*, p. 302, xx 48n; Schmidt, *Clerkly Maker*, pp. 126–30; cf. 'Treatment of the Crucifixion', where Schmidt rejected an association of Matt. 8:20 here with the poverty controversy, claiming that this passage, like the rest of Nede's speech, treats of the poverty of the cross, a theme common in devotional literature. Pearsall, *C-text*, xxii 48, printed 'byde' but did not gloss it. *MED* quotes the line as an example of 'bidden', sense 3(a): 'To go begging, ask for charity'. Although spelling with a double or single medial consonant suggests that both 'bidden' and 'biden' are represented in the manuscripts, the position is complicated by confusion of ME 'bidden' with 'beden' from OE 'beodan' ('offer, command') which gave rise to spellings with a single consonant for the verb 'bidden', exemplified in *MED* with quotations from the *Southern Legendary* under 3(b) and 3(c).
- 96 Examples of 'bidden' or its derivatives in the sense of 'beg' are: B Pro 40, vi 203, vi 237, vii 65, vii 67, vii 81, vii 84, xiii 241, xv 256.
- 97 Cf. Schmidt, *Clerkly Maker*, pp. 126–30.
- 98 Kane and Donaldson, *B Version*, p. 148.
- 99 Examples of the revision of 'bidder' etc. in the C-text are: C viii 246 (B vi 237, A vii 221); C xii 163–4 (B xi 278). B xiii 241 is omitted in C.
- 100 This is discussed below, pp. 149–57.
- 101 *RP* 50 Edw III, vol. 2, p. 332.
- 102 *RP* 50 Edw III, vol. 2, pp. 332, 340 and cf. Pearsall, *C-text*, C Pro 45n, C viii 149n and C ix 159n.
- 103 B vii 68 has 'He is fals wip pe feend and defraudep pe nedy'; cf. A viii 70 which is like B.
- 104 Kane and Donaldson have '[Flite panne]', based on the A-text variant used in A by Kane (A Pro 42) as the harder reading (Kane, *A Version*, p. 160). C Pro 42 has 'Fayteden'.
- 105 B ii 183; A ii 144; C ii 193. The variants include 'fobbes', 'Fabulers', 'folis' and 'flaterers'; for discussion of the A-text variants see Kane, *A Version*, p. 436 n. 144.
- 106 *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*, line 758; for *Piers Plowman* examples see B ii 183 (var.), vi 72, x 72, xiii 242.
- 107 Bod. Lib. MS Douce 104 f. 37^r beside C viii 124 (B vi 117), f. 51^r beside C xi 54 (B x 72).
- 108 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, p. 1406:
 Item, si Christus spontanee mendicauit, vere fuit hypocrita apparens mendicus, non vere existens. Christus vero nunquam fuit vere mendicus, quoniam nullus est vere mendicus, quamuis mendicet: sed fictus, qui sibi potest sufficere. Qui vero mendicat spontanee, est sibi sufficiens: alias scilicet non

- spontanee, sed impellente indigentia mendicaret. Christus ergo ex quo non erat hypocrita, nunquam fecte aut spontanee mendicauit.
- Cf. FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 84, quoted above, p. 67.
- 109 McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, pp. 335–8; Dobson, ed., *Peasants' Revolt*, p. 73.
- 110 Maidstone, *Protectorium Pauperis*, p. 138. For examples of citations of civil law in earlier antimendicant literature see Aquinas, *Contra Impugnantes*, p. A107, *Roman de la Rose*, lines 11315–19; and for Wycliffite interest and other examples see Aston, “‘Caim’s Castles’”, pp. 57, 74 n. 62.
- 111 For the friars’ letter see *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, p. 293; Little, *Grey Friars*, p. 84; and Copeland, M.A. thesis 1938, p. 179. For the rebels’ songs see Dobson, ed., *Peasants’ Revolt*, pp. 379–83.
- 112 Cf. B VII 75; Bonaventure, ‘De Paupertate quoad Mendicatem’, p. 141. The ultimate source for the opposition of these two authorities on discrimination seems to be Augustine, *Enarratio in Psalmum CII*, col. 1326 on Ps. 102:6. The ‘*sit elemosina*’ text was yoked with the Cato tag ‘*Cui des videto*’ in Peter Cantor, ‘*Contra eos qui dant non indigentibus*’, *Verbum Abbreviatum*, col. 150. Tierney, ‘Decretists’ (without noting its occurrence in Augustine’s commentary) noted that the ‘*Desudet elemosyna*’ text seemed ‘to have been a kind of proverbial saying’ although often quoted by canonists as ‘*in scripturis*’ or ‘*evangelio*’ (p. 363 n. 15). Gray, ‘Langland’s Quotations from the Penitential Tradition’, p. 59, noted parallels in writings on penance.
- 113 Maidstone, *Protectorium Pauperis*, p. 143.
- 114 Maidstone, *Determinatio*, Bod. Lib. MS e. Mus. 94 f. 6^v; cf. Edden, ‘Debate’, p. 126. Maidstone attributed the quotation to Isidore (f. 6^v). Bennett, *B text*, p. 220 n. 76, attributed it to Jerome’s commentary on Eccles. 11:6.
- 115 Examples of Ps. 37[36]:25 as an authority against religious mendicancy are Bonaventure, ‘De Paupertate quoad Mendicatem’, p. 134; Thomas Aquinas, *Contra Impugnantes*, p. A107; *De Validis Mendicantibus*, MS Bodley 52 ff. 140^v–141^r.
- 116 This was a key biblical text for the polemicists. Examples of the use of 2 Thess. 3:10, and of its Augustinian gloss (cf. Augustine, *De Opere Monachorum*, chapter 1, cols. 549–50) in polemics on mendicancy are, from the thirteenth century, William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, p. 49; Bonaventure, ‘*Utrum Pauperes Validi*’, p. 157; Aquinas, *Contra Impugnantes*, p. A86; and from the fourteenth century, FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 89; Jordan of Saxony, *Vitasfratrum*, p. 251.
- 117 Oriel 79 f. 1^v; CUL Ll 4 14 f. 1^v; cf. Kane and Donaldson, *B Version*, p. 224, and Bennett, *B text*, p. 84 n. 37–9. Bennett exaggerated when he described the note in the Oriel MS as ‘scribbled’.
- 118 Cf. Pearsall, *C-text*, VIII 242a note *ad loc*.
- 119 Bonaventure, ‘*Utrum Pauperes Validi*’, p. 156.
- 120 Barthelémy, *Defensorium*, p. 163. Barthelémy (d. 1362) was a member of a noble family from Alsace, who studied in Paris in the 1350s; for his life and career see Meersseman, ‘*La Défense*’, pp. 132–4. One MS dates his *Defensorium* 1360 (Walsh, ‘Archbishop FitzRalph’, p. 242 n. 62). On the arguments of his treatise see Meersseman, ‘*La Défense*’, and Walsh, ‘*Hardeby*’ (1971), pp. 71–3.
- 121 *Rosarium*, ‘*Labor*’, ed. Nolcken, D.Phil. thesis 1976, vol. 1, p. 119; cf. *Apology for Lollard Doctrines*, p. 105.
- 122 The Vulgate has ‘aestate’ (‘summer’) at Prov. 20:4, not ‘yeme’ (‘winter’) (Pearsall, *C-text*, VIII 246a note *ad loc*). The misquotation in *Piers Plowman* does not seem to be paralleled in other examples of the text in polemical writings; in the passage the paraphrase has ‘in somer for his sleuthe he shal haue defaute’ (line 245).

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Examples of use of Prov. 20:4 in polemical writings are FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 89; Barthelemy, *Defensorium*, p. 160, and FitzRalph's Second London Sermon, MS Bodley 144 f. 101^r. Ps. 128:2 was an authority in the Lollard account of work; see *Rosarium*, 'Labor', ed. Nolcken, D.Phil. thesis 1976, vol. 1, p. 118; *Apology for Lollard Doctrines*, p. 107. The parable of the talents is Luke 19:11–27; Matt. 25:14–30 (B vi 239–46). This parable may have been associated with the subject of manual labour because it was used in the first chapter of Augustine's *De Opere Monachorum* (col. 550); here Augustine argued that his opponents misinterpreted it as an authority for spiritual work.

- 123 MS Bodley 52 f. 145^v; William of St Amour *De Valido Mendicante*, p. 80. This similarity between these two *quaestiones* has perhaps contributed to the misidentification of this and other *quaestio* by William of St Amour as part of the *De Validis Mendicantibus* in MS Bodley 158. Closely related in content to Bodley 52, Bodley 158 contains the two *quaestiones* by William which appear there (Bodley 52 ff. 115^r–118^v; 118^v–122^v) but run together with *De Validis Mendicantibus* (Bodley 52 ff. 140^v–145^v). In Bodley 158 the treatise begins with *De Validis Mendicantibus* (ff. 147^r–149^r), continues without a break with William's *De Quantitate Eleemosynae* (ff. 149^r–151^r; *Opera Omnia*, pp. 73–80) followed by William's *De Valido Mendicante* (ff. 151^r–152^v; *Opera Omnia*, pp. 80–7). William's *De Periculis*, which also occurs in Bodley 158 (ff. 126^r–142^r) has similarly been subjected to editing in this MS and supplied with marginal commentary (cf. Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour*, p. 271 n. 95). *De Validis Mendicantibus* is also associated with William's *quaestio* in Lambeth Palace MS 357; see Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 98.
- 124 MED cites the A-text reading here, 'Bolde Bidders' (cf. A vii 199), as an example of sense 4(a), and Skeat (*Parallel Texts*), Pearsall, Bennett and Schmidt all implied this more modern meaning since they did not gloss the word. Schmidt included the gloss 'strong' beside the line (Schmidt, *B-Text*, vi 213) but this was presumably intended as a gloss for 'bigge' in an obsolete meaning; Bennett also glossed 'bigge' as 'strong' in this line (Bennett, *B text*, vi 216; Glossary, p. 231).
- 125 Oriel 79 f. 28^r and CUL Ll 4 14 f. 31^v beside B vi 212.
- 126 Kane and Donaldson, *B Version*, p. 92.
- 127 Kane and Donaldson, *B Version*, pp. 115, 195.
- 128 BL MS Addit. 41321 f. 45^v. Pearsall, 'Alliterative Revival', p. 40, noted similarities between these sermons and *Piers Plowman*; for background to them see Hudson, 'Lollard Sect Vocabulary?', p. 24.
- 129 Fowler, *Bible in Early English Literature*, pp. 153–4.
- 130 Huntington Lib. MS HM 114 f. 68^v. Huntington Lib. MS HM 114 ff. 67^v–70^r includes the Rechelesnesse interpolation C xii 169a–C xiii 99 with no passus break, and other modifications, interpolated between B xi 286a and B xi 288 (cf. Russell and Nathan, 'A *Piers Plowman* Manuscript', p. 125).
- 131 Huntington Lib. MS HM 114 f. 66^r, 'blynd'.
- 132 B xi 243, 248, 249, 280, 281, 282, 282a variants.
- 133 C xii 99–xiii 127.
- 134 C xiii 32–93.
- 135 CT A 179–80. The word may have acquired controversial associations. Although the MED entry does not support this, it is suggested for example by the rejection of the word in *Canterbury Tales* MS Harley 7334, in favour of the weaker 'cloysterlees'. Robinson described this emendation as 'officious and unnecessary' (Chaucer, *Works*, p. xxxviii).
- 136 Donaldson, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 171–74.

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- 137 Bod. Lib. MS e. Mus. 94 f. 7^v (Maidstone's *Determinatio*); cf. Edden, 'Debate', p. 131. Adams, 'Need', pp. 280–1 n. 8, suggested that FitzRalph distinguished 'spontaneous' from 'voluntary' *poverty* in the Second London Sermon. Burr, 'Correctorium Controversy' showed that the issue of *vows* lay at the heart of early stages of the *usus pauper* conflict. The relationship of this with the later conflict over vows is not clear. The issue would have become very much more dangerous for the friars after the distinction between possession and use had been challenged, when arguments against a vow of *usus pauper* must pointedly have become arguments against the Franciscans' very profession and rule.
- 138 See for example Pearsall's notes to C XI 196 and C XIII 79, and Middleton, 'Audience and Public', p. 121, who suggested (without any detailed references or illustration) that 'poor' is revised in the C-text to avoid association of the poem with 'poor preachers'.
- 139 Knighton, *Chronicon*, vol. 2, p. 174, recording the opinions of an unnamed Wycliffite (possibly Repingdon; Hudson, 'Lollardy', p. 271) under the year 1382, claimed that he had preached falsely 'quod Christus nunquam expressit in sacra scriptura quod voluit quod homo relinqueret omnia sua temporalia nihil sibi retinendo' (for an account of the date and composition of this work see V. H. Galbraith, 'Chronicle'); Maidstone, *Determinatio*, Bod. Lib. MS e. Mus. 94 f. 5^r: '[Ashwardby] posuit quod abrenunciatio temporalium in communi et proprio non est perfectio'; cf. Edden, 'Debate', p. 122.
- 140 See for example Adams, 'Need', p. 291 and n. 35.
- 141 Bod. Lib. Digby 102 f. 46^v beside C XII 172; CUL Ff 5 35 f. 102^r beside C XII 136; *notas* are Bod. Lib. Digby 102 f. 46^v beside C XII 182; f. 47^v beside C XIII 31; CUL Dd 3 13 f. 54^v beside C XIII 30, 32; f. 52^v beside C XII 139 (B XI 256).
- 142 Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 f. 54^v beside C XII 97a (B XI 176a); Bod. Lib. Douce 104 f. 56^v beside C XII 100 (B XI 190); f. 57^r beside C XII 118 (B XI 229).
- 143 CUL Dd I 17 f. 15^{r-v} beside B XI 233, 242, 248.
- 144 Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 f. 70^r beside C XVI 117 (B XIV 277); CUL Ff 5 35 f. 116^v beside C XVI 120 (B XIV 280); Bod. Lib. Digby 102 f. 60^r beside C XVI 127 (B XIV 292). *Notas* occur in CUL Dd I 17 f. 19^v at B XIV 64 ('nota bene'), 69, 76, 127; CUL Dd 3 13 f. 64^v at C XV 279 (B XIV 102); Huntington Lib. MS HM 114 ff. 85^v, 86^v, 87^r at B XIV 130, 135, 200, 222; Bod. Lib. Digby 102 ff. 59^r, 60^r at C XVI 46–7, 116 (B XIV 204–5, 276); Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 f. 69^v at C XVI 104, 107 ('notate bene') (B XIV 264, 267).
- 145 Bod. Lib. Douce 104 f. 106^v beside C XXII 10–11 (B XX 10–11); f. 107^r beside C XXII 35 (B XX 35); Oriel 79 f. 83 [87]^v beside B XX 7.
- 146 Bod. Lib. Douce 104 f. 37^v beside C VIII 167–9 (B VI 171–2); f. 38^r beside C VIII 205–6 (B VI 199–200); f. 40^r beside C VIII 323 (B VI 300).
- 147 Oriel 79 ff. 27^r, 28^r, 30^v beside B VI 129, 144, 191ff, VII 73, 85; CUL Ll 4 14 ff. 30^v, 31^v beside B VI 128, 144, 189–90; in addition both MSS have 'Wastour' beside B VI 167 (Oriel 79 f. 27^r; CUL Ll 4 14 f. 31^r) (the spellings given here are those of Oriel 79).
- 148 *Exiit qui seminat*, *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, vol. 2, cols. 1120–1; cf. Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, pp. 54–7; Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, p. 146.
- 149 William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, p. 20.
- 150 Peters, *Heresy and Authority*, pp. 217–33.
- 151 For the influence of Averroism on FitzRalph see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 18, 48, 53, 171 n. 138, 172 n. 142. For the *Summa de Questionibus Armenorum* see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 171, and Leff, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 2–4 and n. 2; and for FitzRalph's interpretation and study of the Bible here and more

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- generally, see Walsh, 'Preaching, Pastoral Care, and *Sola Scriptura*'. Minnis, "“Authorial Intention” and “Literal Sense”", examined FitzRalph's notion of literal sense, but did not place this in the wider context of the debate over clerical dominion.
- 152 For the text of the prayer see Hammerich, 'FitzRalph and the Mendicants', pp. 20–1.
- 153 CT D 1919–20; compare the lines in the *Romaunt of the Rose*, where Faus Semblant objects that those who claim to find authorities for the begging of Christ and the apostles use both text and gloss; these lines are a variant in the French MSS which was included in the Middle English translation (*The Romaunt of the Rose*, lines 6543–57).
- 154 Mann, *Chaucer*, p. 39; Williams, 'Chaucer', p. 511; Hanning, 'Roasting a Friar', especially pp. 10–11 and n. 16.
- 155 Fleming, 'Summoner's Tale', p. 695 and cf. Fleming, 'Anticlerical Satire'.
- 156 MS Bodley 144 f. 94^v; Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 410, suggested that Conway was perhaps FitzRalph's opponent.
- 157 MS Bodley 144 ff. 112^v–127^r.
- 158 MS Bodley 144 f. 113^v.
- 159 Oriol 79 f. 87[91]^r beside B xx 315. Schmidt's reading of the Sire *Penetrans domos* sequence ('*Lele Wordes*', pp. 141–5) emphasises the importance of the theme of false words here, but does not mention the tradition and its contemporary adaptation.
- 160 Bod. Lib. MS e. Mus. f. 5^v; cf. Edden, 'Debate', p. 124.
- 161 Some C-text MSS have the spelling 'Aueroy' (C xv 99); cf. spelling 'Aueroy's' in Trevisa's translation of FitzRalph's *Defensio Curatorum*, p. 72. With this identification of 'Seint Auereys' cf. Middleton, 'Passion'.
- 162 For examples of 'glose' and 'glosen' in their established senses see *MED*, 'glose', n. 1(a), 3; 'glosen', v. 3(a) (b) (c). For the new meanings see 'glosen', v. 1(a) (b) and 2 (a) (b) (c), and 'glose', n. 2(a) (the example from *Cursor* (a1325) here 'Pai com to scrift a glos to make Noght in entent pair sin for-sake' should perhaps be included under 'glose', n. 3, 'maken glose'; it may provide a clue to the development of the antifraternal senses). For new derivatives see 'gloser', n. and verbal noun 'glosing(e)'. Hanning, 'Roasting a Friar', pp. 10–11, gave a different interpretation of the *MED* examples, implying that the 'flattery' senses were later than the 'false interpretation' senses.
- 163 *Book of Vices and Virtues*, p. 5.
- 164 *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*, lines 273–5, 345, 367, 515, 585, 709.
- 165 CT B 1180. For the possibility that 'glose' was a Lollard sect word see Hudson, 'Lollard Sect Vocabulary?', p. 20 and n. 27.
- 166 Kane and Donaldson emended on the basis of the A- and C-texts to 'pee on englissh' (B iv 145), and Schmidt proposed '[E]ngl[ys]sed' (see *B-Text*, p. 268, B iv 145n). Another example of this word new in C is C vi 259.

4 Charity: the ground of anticlericalism

- 1 See for example Pantin, *English Church*, p. 126; Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, pp. 222–3; Graddon, 'Langland', pp. 188–90; and Kean, 'Justice'.
- 2 Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, p. 228; Wilks, 'Predestination'; cf. Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 2, p. 546.
- 3 The analysis of the sources of fifteenth-century disendowment politics by Aston, "“Caim's Castles”", has been useful for the account which follows.

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- 4 For the document see *Munimenta Academica*, vol. 1, pp. 208–11, and cf. Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 437; Little, *Grey Friars*, p. 82; Aston, “‘Caim’s Castles’”, p. 50.
- 5 Cf. Aston, “‘Caim’s Castles’”.
- 6 The letter is preserved in Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College MS 64 f. 126^v. For its date and the probable link with ‘Frater Johannes’ see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 436.
- 7 Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College MS 64 f. 126^v:
 ... determinauit contra possessiones ecclesie dampnabiliter, inuehendo licere quibuscumque ecclesiarum fundatoribus propter clericorum abusus bona Deo et ecclesie dedicata auferre; et eadem secularibus et militibus conferre et simpliciter applicare. Secundo quod decime ecclesie magis debentur fratribus mendicantibus quam curatis ...
 Cf. Aston, “‘Caim’s Castles’”, pp. 70–1 n. 24, with this reading of the letter, which is different from that proposed by Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 436–7.
- 8 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 85; Barthelemy, *Defensorium*, p. 151.
- 9 *Eulogium Historiarum*, vol. 3, p. 338.
- 10 Thompson, Ph.D. thesis 1936, vol. 1, pp. 73–8, text in vol. 2; cf. Pantin, *English Church*, pp. 170–2.
- 11 Pantin, ‘Adam Easton’.
- 12 Wyclif, *De Civili Dominio*, Book 2, vol. 2, p. 18. For this aspect of Wyclif’s thought see Wilks, ‘Reformatio Regni’ and ‘Royal Patronage and Anti-Papalism’.
- 13 Uthred, *De Perfectione Vivendi*, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 103, p. 322.
- 14 Noted by Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, p. 121 and p. 215 n. 65. Alford, ‘More Unidentified Quotations’, pp. 280–1, rejected the comparison with *Piers Plowman*, claiming, ‘The subject of the immediate context in *Piers* is penance, and thus it is in discussions of penance that the phrase *ad pristinum statum* should first be sought’ (p. 280), concluding that the concern here is ‘with the restoration of a penitent clergy’s “right” to perform its vocational duties’ (p. 281). But the ‘subject’ here is not literally ‘penance’; the king could not actually ‘confesse yow Religiouses’; what Alford has probably ‘identified’ is the source of a loaded *metaphor* which had become current in anticlerical writings.
- 15 Pantin, ‘Medieval English Treatises’, p. 205, and for the text Appendix III, pp. 214–15. The St Albans book is dated by Pantin before 1394 (p. 202). An example of the Lollard attack on monastic temporalities is the ‘Lollard Disendowment Bill’ where the extent of monastic wealth is calculated (Hudson, *English Wycliffite Writings*, pp. 135–7), and see Pantin, ‘Medieval English Treatises’, p. 206.
- 16 For *De Dotacione Ecclesie Sponse Christi* see MS Bodley 859 ff. 278^v–279^r and cf. Thompson, Ph.D. thesis 1936, vol. 1, pp. 66–8 and vol. 2, and Pantin, *English Church*, pp. 169–70. For the discussion of monastic history in *De Substantialibus* see Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 103, pp. 295–301, and cf. Pantin, ‘Two Treatises’, pp. 368–74.
- 17 Cf. discussion in the introduction to the edition of Jordan’s *Vitasfratrum* by Arbesmann and Hümpfner, pp. xlviii–xlix.
- 18 Walsh, ‘Hardeby’ (1970), pp. 205–6.
- 19 For the series of four *determinationes* issued by Woodford c. 1389–90 see Catto, D.Phil. thesis 1969, pp. 25–9 and Walsh, ‘Hardeby’ (1970), p. 227. Catto noted the similarity with the Monk of Bury’s Treatise but discounted a direct link (p. 27).
- 20 See Eric Doyle, ‘John Wyclif’s *De Religione*’. On the basis of quotations in

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Woodford's writings Doyle reconstructed the outline of *De Religione*, arguing that it lies behind what has been preserved as part of Wyclif's *De Civili Dominio*, Book 3 (which it must therefore obviously predate) and part of *De Apostasia*. W. R. Thomson, *John Wyclif*, p. 52 n. 19, argued against Doyle that Wyclif himself never made such a work, but possibly someone else lifted and retitled the material.

- 21 B x 329; B xv 557. For the tradition see Gradon, 'Langland', pp. 185–6.
- 22 Gower, *Works*; French Works, *Mirour*, lines 18637–48; Latin Works, *Vox Clamantis*, Book 3, chapter 5, lines 283–8.
- 23 'Of Clerks Possessioners', ed. Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, p. 122. In a Lollard version of the satirical 'Satan's Letter' Satan claims credit for Constantine's donation (*Epistola Sathanae ad Cleros*, ed. Hudson, *English Wycliffite Writings*, p. 90). For another example see Arnold, *English Works of John Wyclif*, vol. 3, pp. 340–1 and cf. Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, vol. 2, p. 232, C xviii 220n.
- 24 Uthred, *De Perfectione Vivendi*, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 103, p. 322:

... per suos spiritu diabolo agitatos non desunt proclamare ecclesiasticos nimium in prediis et possessionibus habundare, ac immo voluptatibus et quasi inumeris[?] viciis deservire, ac propterea reges et principes debere super habundancias huiusmodi auferre ac ecclesiam reducere ad deuotum et sanctum statum ecclesie primitiue, isti ministri Sathane secundum apostolum 2 Cor. xi 'operari subdoli transfigurantes se velut ministros iusticie in apostolos Christi, sicut ipse Sathanas transfigurat se in angelum lucis' nituntur ecclesiam gencium subuertere.

See further Pantin, 'Two Treatises', p. 376. Another example of Uthred's attempts to discredit proponents of disendowment is *De Dotacione Ecclesie Sponse Christi*, where again his opponents are characterised as ministers of Satan with the use of traditional satirical texts (MS Bodley 859 f. 277^r; cf. Thompson, Ph.D. thesis 1936, vol. 1, p. 27).

- 25 Higden, *Polychronicon*, vol. 5, pp. 130–1; the correction to the English translation is recorded here as a variant written over an erasure. Fowler, 'Editorial "Jamming"', p. 259, implied that more than one of the manuscripts of the translation have this variant.
- 26 Higden, *Polychronicon*, vol. 5, p. 130; Uthred, *De Perfectione Vivendi*, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 103, p. 322. Cf. Pantin, 'Two Treatises', p. 376, who (using two MSS) quoted 'effusum' rather than 'infusum', and noted the use of the legend in *Piers Plowman*.
- 27 Higden, *Polychronicon*, vol. 5, p. 131; 'Of Clerks Possessioners', ed. Matthew, *English Works of Wyclif*, p. 123.
- 28 Quoted by Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, vol. 2, p. 232, C xviii 220n.
- 29 Kane and Donaldson, *B Version*, p. 224.
- 30 B xv 272–95; C xvii 9–24.
- 31 B xv 414–23.
- 32 Uthred, *De Dotacione Ecclesie Sponse Christi*, MS Bodley 859 ff. 278^v, 280^v:

Duo apostoli qui erant sequaces verissimi Domini Nostri Ihesu Christi, et ab ipso deputati vt pascerent oues eius (Io. 21); statim post missionem spiritus sancti in eos ab ipso spiritu plenius informati vitam ecclesiasticam instituerunt, scilicet, vt forent eis omnia communia. Nec agros nec domos possessiones ac substancias retinerent, set omnia huiusmodi venderent, et precium inter singulos diuiderent prout cuique opus erat, ne quisquam egenus erat inter illos: Act. 2 et 4...

[f. 280^v] hec dotacio ecclesie, [say opponents] cum tot et tantis dominiis,

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- possessionibus, prediis, libertatibus et huiusmodi mundialibus, prouocat et inducit ecclesiasticos ad vicia varia exercenda.
- Cf. Thompson, Ph.D. thesis 1936, vol. 1, p. 68, and text, vol. 2.
- 33 Vatican Lib. Reg. Lat. 127 f. 167^r.
- 34 Hardeby, *De Vita Evangelica*, Bod. Lib. MS Digby 113 f. 48^r. Cf. Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1970), p. 205; (1971) p. 23.
- 35 Jordan of Saxony, *Vitasfratrum*, pp. 13–14; cf. pp. 320–5, and Mathes, 'Poverty Movement' (1969), pp. 81–96.
- 36 Jordan of Saxony, *Vitasfratrum*, p. 14.
- 37 Vatican Lib. Reg. Lat. 127 f. 167^{r-v}:
Dicit enim, quod renunciabant omnibus facultatibus suis, qui se ad huiusmodi philosophiam id est monachatum dederunt, et omnes uite sollicitudines procul abiciebant, et secedentes in secreciora suburbiorum loca, uel in agros solitarios, agebant uitam tanto abstinentie rigore districtam...
- 38 *De Institutis Monachorum*, pp. xxi–xxii.
- 39 Vatican Lib. Reg. Lat. 127 f. 166^v:
Istud etiam uite propositum sacram uidelicet religionem monachorum, Christus auctor omnium ueraciter instituit et auctentizauit, quando primum antiquis patribus reuelante spiritu sancto obseruandum et instituendum innotuit; deinde tempore gracie, suis cum discipulis in terra conuersando ad abrenunciacionem rerum secularium eos eorumque sequaces prouocans ut relictis omnibus eum sequerentur Matt. 3 'Venite post me faciam uos fieri piscatores hominum et cetera' et Matt. 19 'Si uis perfectus esse uade et uende omnia que habes et da pauperibus et habebis thesaurum in celo et ueni sequere me'; item: 'si quis uult post me uenire abneget semet ipsum et sequatur me'. Istud quoque propositum uite in euangelio primum secutus est ille Petrus ad Dominum fiducialiter pro se suisque discipulis et cenobitis ait Matt. 19: 'Ecce nos relinquimus omnia secuti sumus te'.
- Cf. *De Institutis Monachorum*, p. xx.
- 40 For details of the dispute between the Canons and the Hermits see Sanderlin, 'John Capgrave'; Arbesmann, 'The "Vita Aurelii Augustini Hipponensis Episcopi"', pp. 351–2, and 'Jordanus of Saxony's Vita S. Augustini', p. 348; and Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, pp. 94–5.
- 41 *De Ortu et Prioritate Ordinis Monachorum*, p. xxiii. For the St Albans version of the Monk of Bury's Treatise see Pantin, 'Some Medieval English Treatises', pp. 202–6.
- 42 Jordan of Saxony, *Vitasfratrum*, pp. 249–50.
- 43 William of St Amour, *Collectiones*, p. 263.
- 44 *De Ortu et Prioritate Ordinis Monachorum*, p. xxiii.
- 45 Pierce the Ploughmans Crede, lines 307–10.
- 46 CT C 443–6.
- 47 Only Skeat prints the reading of most B-text MSS 'foules'; cf. B xv 313–18.
- 48 CUL Ff 5 35 f. 120^r beside C xvii 15.
- 49 William of St Amour, *Collectiones*, pp. 262–3.
- 50 Bonaventure, 'Utrum Pauperes Validi', p. 159.
- 51 Aquinas, *Contra Impugnantes*, p. A88.
- 52 Pecham, *Tractatus Pauperis*, p. 23.
- 53 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 93. The friars objected to this use of the example of St Francis in their *Appellacio*; Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College MS 64 f. 4^r.
- 54 FitzRalph, *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, Book 6, chapter 31; Bod. Lib. MS Auct. F. infra 1.2 f. 69^r:

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... 'duces', ac 'comites', seu 'barones', non video qualiter poterunt rationabiliter appellari, cum proprietatem talium rerum non habeant set omnia bona illa sunt bona sue ecclesie.

For FitzRalph's argument here see Mathes, 'Poverty Movement' (1969), p. 22, and Brock, Ph.D. thesis 1953, p. lxxii.

55 Cf. Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', p. 341.

56 C xvii 37–50.

57 The similarity was noted by Gradon, 'Langland', p. 189.

58 See for example Uthred's *quaestio* on mendicancy, in BN MS Lat. 3183 f. 164^v:

... illi qui de bonis parentum viuere possunt set nolunt, ymmo de bonis pauperum, tales committunt sacrilegium.

See also Conway's *quaestio* on renunciation, Bod. Lib. MS Rawl. G. 40 f. 45^v: Sic abdicantes bona temporalia et viuentes de aliquorum elemosina sacrilegium committunt ergo ... canon. 1^a q 2^a: 'clerici qui bonis parentum et eorum opibus sustentari possunt, si quod pauperum est accipiunt, sacrilegium committunt'.

For further examples of this quotation see Gradon, 'Langland', pp. 188–9. For its importance in the almsgiving debate see Aston, "'Caim's Castles'", pp. 51, 59–60.

59 MS Bodley 240, p. 849.

60 Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College, MS 64 f. 126^v.

61 *Munimenta Academica*, vol. 1, pp. 208–11.

62 Wright, *Political Poems and Songs*, vol. 1, pp. 208–10; see also Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, pp. 134–8, who dated the work 1361–72, probably nearer 1362 (p. 135 n. 2), and suggested that the author was probably the Augustinian friar John Erghome; he also proposed a link between the work and the controversy with the Augustinian Canons over priority and foundation because John of Bridlington was an Augustinian Canon (pp. 137–8). However, this is open to question as it seems Erghome probably only knew an anonymous text of the prophecies (which he did not himself write, contrary to Gwynn's supposition); see Meyvaert, 'John Erghome', and cf. Reeves, *Prophecy*, p. 256.

63 Bonaventure, 'Utrum Pauperes Validi', p. 158; cf. 'De Paupertate quoad Abrenuntiationem', p. 125.

64 Jordan of Saxony, *Vitasfratrum*, p. 259.

65 William of St Amour, *Collectiones*, pp. 238–9.

66 MS Bodley 240, p. 850.

67 Bod. Lib. MS Digby 113 f. 50^v; cf. Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1971), p. 24.

68 *Rosarium Theologie*, p. 85.

69 Thompson, Ph.D. thesis 1936, vol. 1, pp. 73–8, text in vol. 2; Pantin, *English Church*, p. 171.

70 V. H. Galbraith, 'Articles'.

71 See Little, 'Statute of Mortmain', for the text of the letter and discussion.

72 Little, 'Statute of Mortmain'. According to Little (p. 673) there was no provision for licences for alienation in the statute, although these were granted in practice. See McKisack, *Fourteenth Century*, pp. 307–8, for fourteenth-century examples of applications of the law.

73 Little, 'Statute of Mortmain', p. 674. This characteristic should perhaps be investigated more fully in connection with the problem of why the friaries were not named as targets in the early fifteenth-century Lollard 'Disendowment Bill'; for the problem see Aston, "'Caim's Castles'", p. 54. It may also explain why the friars Ashbourne and Bankyn were willing to take the antipapal line in 1371 – they argued that clerical possessions were held 'par douns des Emperours Roiz Princes

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- et autres seignours seculers' (V. H. Galbraith, 'Articles', p. 581) – as was the Franciscan Mardisley in the 1373 Great Council.
- 74 Coleman, 'The Two Jurisdictions'; Pecham later modified his argument, claiming dominion was transferred to the pope (p. 97).
 - 75 After B x 303; Kane and Donaldson rejected the line as spurious, explaining it as 'scribal response to the immediate context' to increase emphasis (*B Version*, p. 193 and n. 128).
 - 76 MS Bodley 240, p. 849.
 - 77 B XII 236–60.
 - 78 B xv 136–48, 244–8.
 - 79 The theme of bequests in FitzRalph's sermons is discussed in Hammerich, 'FitzRalph and the Mendicants', p. 39; Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, pp. 211–13, 196 and n. 37. Like restitution, the topic of bequests directly affected the laity and therefore many of FitzRalph's sermons (not merely the London polemics) include allusions to this matter. As with restitution, it is likely that this topic was always understood to have antifraternel implications, even though its implications were not always spelt out in the sermon notes. Hammerich and Walsh, however, did not consider that this topic was always an integral part of antifraternel polemic.
 - 80 MS Bodley 144 f. 66^r.
 - 81 MS Bodley 144 f. 92^v.
 - 82 MS Bodley 144 f. 16^r (Sermon 9, Lichfield); f. 29^r (Sermon 17, Burton on Trent); f. 41^r (Sermon 26, London). For the audience of the Burton on Trent sermon see Hammerich, 'FitzRalph and the Mendicants', pp. 33–4.
 - 83 MS Bodley 144 f. 149^{r-v} (Sermon 72, Chapel of Benedict XII); FitzRalph, 'Bini Sermones', ed. Zimmerman, pp. 175–6 (Carmelite friars' church).
 - 84 MS Bodley 144 f. 133^v (Sermon 69). The theme also occurs in the antifraternel Sermon 88, MS Bodley 144 f. 243^{r-v}.
 - 85 Conway, *Defensio Religionis Mendicantium*, p. 1344 [1440].
 - 86 MS Bodley 144 f. 65^v; these preoccupations also characterise the antifraternel pastoral manual *Memoriale Presbiterorum*; see Haren, D.Phil. thesis, 1975, vol. 1, pp. 336–7; this manual deals with the twin duties of giving alms and retaining necessities: a theme central to FitzRalph's treatment of bequests.
 - 87 *Rosarium Theologie*, pp. 72–3; quoting from FitzRalph's Sermon 39 (MS Bodley 144 ff. 59^v–60^r).
 - 88 Cf. B XIII 92–3 and C xv 46–7 where the reference to flesh-eating is omitted. Chaucer's Monk's preference for a fat swan (CT A 206) is another example of the combination of the two themes of gluttony and meat-eating, with an allusion to the question of whether 'two-footed' meat counted; for this and further examples of these traditional themes see Mann, *Chaucer*, pp. 218–19, and for later antifraternel examples *Upland's Rejoinder*, lines 200–1 and *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede* lines 779–82, where meat-eating is presented as a hypocritical departure from the friars' rule; cf. also the satirical treatment of the friar's delicate tastes in the *Summoner's Tale*, CT D 1839–50.
 - 89 Woodford, *De Dominio Civili Clericorum*, p. 86. This tradition might account for the reference to the 'fermerer' in the *Summoner's Tale*, CT D 1859.
 - 90 Cf. exploitation of the topic in Wrape's speech, discussed above p. 20. Cf. also CT A 165–92. For the hunting tradition in antimonastic satire see Mann, *Chaucer*, pp. 24–5, and more generally, Scattergood, 'Skelton's *Ware the Hauke*'. Mann surely underestimated the significance of comparing Chaucer's Monk with temporal lords. Its meaning is clear in Hereford's sermon of 1382, which includes the claim that possessioners 'in sua prima fundacione non dedignabantur vocari et

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- esse serui et rustici set iam volunt vocari domini et equitare in magnis equis et apparatu sollempni' (MS Bodley 240, p. 849).
- 91 MS Bodley 144 f. 117^r.
- 92 MS Bodley 240, p. 850. Cf. *Jack Upland*, p. 61. For the antifraternal tradition and for further examples see Mann, *Chaucer*, p. 232 n. 139, and Fleming 'Summoner's Tale', pp. 696–7.
- 93 See CT D 1718–20; *Quis Dabit Capiti Pelagus Aquarum*, p. 319.
- 94 Quoted by Little, *Grey Friars*, p. 79. See also Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, vol. 2, p. 69 n. 165. For the widening of the target of the formerly antifraternal 'buildings' topic see Aston, "'Caim's Castles'", pp. 47–8.
- 95 Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, p. 164.
- 96 *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, Book 6, chapters 18–19, Bod. Lib. MS Auct. F. infra 1.2 ff. 63^v–64^v; *Unusquisque*, p. 67.
- 97 Eric Doyle, 'William Woodford's "De Dominio Civili Clericorum"', p. 68.
- 98 Kane, *A Version*, pp. 49–50 (MSS R and E); CT A 258.
- 99 See Mann, *Chaucer*, p. 42, for the tradition.
- 100 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 62.
- 101 Havelly, 'Chaucer's Friar', p. 341, linked the B Pro 64 example with the importance of 'chaffare' in Wycliffite tracts on merchants but did not notice its implications for civil law.
- 102 For the antifraternal topic of the friar-pedlar see Mann, *Chaucer*, pp. 42–3, and Havelly, 'Chaucer's Friar', p. 343 n. 7. As with the 'chaffare' topic, the point of this satirical topic is surely not that friars are guilty of simony (as proposed by Pearsall, *C-text*, C Pro 62n) nor simply greed for profit (implied by Mann, *Chaucer*, p. 42; and Havelly, 'Chaucer's Friar', who wrote of friar Huberd's 'commercial motives', p. 337), but that the friars' pastoral activities are civil transactions. Godden, 'Plowmen and Hermits', p. 139, suggested a pun on 'Haukyn' (hawking), as did Norton-Smith, *William Langland*, p. 117; cf. 'wafre' (wayfarer) (B XIII 226).
- 103 Given the importance of simony in previous anticlerical satire (cf. Yunk, *Lineage*) its lack of importance and strange use in *Piers Plowman* are notable. The explanation must lie with the nature of the new anticlericalism. The collocation with 'civil' (law) may be part of efforts to incorporate 'simony' into the vocabulary of the new satire. Usage of the word and concept in contemporary and later texts might therefore repay study. Given the radical changes in the semantics of satirical and polemical vocabulary generated by the new philosophy, it is unlikely that the explanations for 'civil' and 'simony' in *Piers Plowman* offered by Barratt, 'Characters "Civil" and "Theology"', and Gilbert, "'Civil" and the Notaries', go far enough. W. R. Thomson, *John Wyclif*, p. 64, noted that Wyclif's 'concept of simony extended far beyond the usual bounds'.
- 104 Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, prints BL Cott. Vesp. B xvi f. 66^v at C xvii 296; 'distinctio caritatis' also appears in this position (C xvi 296) in London Univ. Lib. S.L.v.17 f. 69^r; BL Royal 18 B xvii f. 88^v has 'distinctio caritatis' beside C xvii 126 (not B). 'Caritas' occurs beside C xvi 340 (B xv 217) in BL Cott. Vesp. B xvi f. 67^r. TCD 212 f. 63^r has 'caritas' beside C xvi 296. The note in CUL Ff 5 35 f. 119^v appears beside C xvi 348–9 (B xv 226–7). The tradition is not exclusive to C-text MSS; B-text Cambridge, Trinity College B 15 17 f. 89^r has 'quid est caritas' beside B xv 149a–50.
- 105 Oriel 79 f. 65^r.
- 106 Oriel 79 f. 64^v beside a variant reading of B xv 313, 'ffor we bee goddis fowles and abide alwey'; f. 65^r beside B xv 321; f. 65^r beside B xv 341. CUL Ll 4 14 f. 75^r beside B xv 313, 321–2; f. 76^v beside B xv 342 (spelling of Oriel 79). Both CUL

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- Ll 4 14 and Oriel 79 add 'Quid [?] est dare impijs' beside B xv 336 var. (CUL Ll 4 14 f. 75^v; Oriel 79 f. 65^r).
- 107 Wyclif, *De Civili Dominio*, Book 2, vol. 2, p. 18:
 Unde inter cetera opera caritatis foret unum precipium, yerarchiam ecclesiasticam que debet esse supremi ordinis, si implicacione negociorum secularium degeneret, reducere ad pristinam dignitatem.
- Book 3, vol. 4, p. 460:
 Elemosina foret docere clericos per ablacionem temporalium occasione quorum abusorum peccant gravius, igitur seculares domini sic tenentur.
- 108 Higden, *Polychronicon*, trans. Trevisa, vol. 6, pp. 465–7.
- 109 MS Bodley 240, p. 850.
- 110 *Munimenta Academica*, vol. 1, p. 210. Cf. Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College MS 64 f. 126^v:
 ... nec possumus eum compellere ad reuocacionem publicam nec ad aliquam aliam penam propter confidenciam quam habet in magnatibus de regno quos dicit velle se defendere in hac causa ...
- See further Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 436.
- 111 Pantin, 'Benedictine Opponent'. Dahmus, 'John Wyclif', pp. 56–7 questioned Pantin's interpretation of the Prior's document, arguing that the government was trying to silence Wyclif too, rather than trying to protect him.
- 112 Higden, *Polychronicon*, vol. 6, pp. 344–6.
- 113 RP 50 Edw. III, vol. 2, p. 337; Holmes, *Good Parliament*, pp. 144–5. Holmes emphasised the importance of the political crisis of 1375–6, associated with the Good Parliament, for subsequent anticlericalism (pp. 197–8).
- 114 Wyclif, *De Civili Dominio*, Book 2, vol. 2, p. 4.
- 115 MS Bodley 240, p. 849.
- 116 Pantin, 'Some Medieval English Treatises', Appendix III, pp. 214–15.
- 117 C III 314–31; Wyclif, *De Officio Regis*; see Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 2, pp. 543–5; Wilks, 'Reformatio Regni', pp. 118–19, and 'Royal Patronage and Anti-Papalism'. Baldwin, *Theme of Government*, examined the influence of Wyclif's absolutist theory of monarchy in *Piers Plowman*, and more fully in her Ph.D. thesis (1975), where she commented on some aspects of contemporary disendowment politics in this connection. W. R. Thomson, *John Wyclif*, pp. 60–2, dated Wyclif's *De Officio Regis* mid 1379; see further there for extant MSS and discussion.
- 118 For monastic apocalypticism and *Piers Plowman* see especially Bloomfield's *Piers Plowman as a Fourteenth-Century Apocalypse*. Bloomfield discounted the importance of the contribution of the Franciscan Spirituals (p. 95), largely it seems on grounds of date. Szittyá, with 'Antifraternal Tradition', *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, and Ph.D. thesis 1971, is among those who have examined the influence of the prophetic writings of the secular cleric William of St Amour in *Piers Plowman*. Adams, 'Need' (especially p. 288 and n. 28), suggested a link between the treatment of Nede in B xx and the *De Antichristo* (possibly by William of St Amour; see below p. 210 n. 145). On prophecy and anticlericalism generally see Lerner, 'Medieval Prophecy', and on the tradition in *Piers Plowman* generally, see Emmerson, *Antichrist*, pp. 200–3.
- 119 Douie, *Nature and Effect*, pp. 7–8; Szittyá, 'Antifraternal Tradition', pp. 291–2, and *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 27–9; and for a bibliography of the dispute see Bloomfield and Reeves, 'Joachism', p. 772 n. 2.
- 120 Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, pp. 68–70; Szittyá, 'Antifraternal Tradition'. Accounts of the affair were included in William's *De Periculis* (pp. 38–9) and the *Roman de la*

- Rose, lines 11761-866. It had been thought that no MS of Gerard's work had survived, but it seems that Dresden MS Landesbibl. A 121 may include it (Bloomfield, 'Recent Scholarship on Joachim', p. 33).
- 121 Szittyá, 'Antifraternal Tradition', and *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 27ff.
- 122 Uthred, *Contra Querelas Fratrum*, p. 26; *Sedens Super Flumina*, line 105 and n.
- 123 Jack Upland, p. 58; *Friar Daw's Reply*, lines 217-24. For eschatology in Wyclif's writings and in the Wycliffite tradition in Middle English see Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 167-72, 212-21.
- 124 Uthred, *Contra Querelas Fratrum*, pp. 25-8, 35-7; *De Perfectione Vivendi*, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 103, p. 322; *De Dotacione Ecclesie Sponse Christi*, MS Bodley 859 f. 277^r; cf. Thompson, Ph.D. thesis 1936, vol. 1, p. 27.
- 125 The 'Autobiographical Prayer' was edited by Hammerich, 'FitzRalph and the Mendicants', pp. 18-22; there has been some difficulty over which period in his life FitzRalph is referring to in this text, but Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 16, argued convincingly that it refers to the conflict with the friars, and accordingly dated it 1358-60. The record of the sittings of the tribunal at Avignon (*Processus Summarius* in Cambridge, Sidney Sussex College MS 64 ff. 111^v-113^v) shows FitzRalph was denounced - although it is not clear by whom exactly - as a scandalmonger, heretic, and heresiarch, in addition to the claims that he was Antichrist or the 'devil' (Walsh, 'Archbishop FitzRalph', p. 239, and for the *Processus*, p. 225).
- 126 For evidence for the knowledge of William's prophetic polemics see Szittyá, 'Antifraternal Tradition', p. 290 n. 10, and *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 62-122.
- 127 Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, pp. 218-23; Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, pp. 73-81, 122-30, 210-37. For a list of thirteenth-century pseudo-Joachimist writings which imply that the 'spiritual men' are the Friars Preachers or Minor see Reeves, 'Joachimist Expectations', p. 112 n. 6.
- 128 Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, p. 235.
- 129 Reeves, 'Joachimist Expectations', p. 114.
- 130 Reeves, 'Joachimist Expectations', pp. 123-5 (but the suggestion here of a link with the conflict between the Hermits and the Canons is no longer tenable, as was noted above, p. 205 n. 62). Erghome is known to have had Joachimist material in his library (Reeves, 'Joachimist Expectations', pp. 123-4; Gwynn, *English Austin Friars*, pp. 132-4).
- 131 For Woodford see Catto, D.Phil. thesis 1969, pp. 72, 84, 93-5, and for the *Opus Arduum* and knowledge of Olivi in Lollard circles see Hudson, 'Neglected Wycliffite Text', pp. 263-4.
- 132 Crowley, *The Vision of Pierce Plowman*, first edition, folios l, lxxxv. For the marginal glosses in Crowley's editions cf. King, *Reformation Literature*, pp. 332-8. The alpha tradition of the B-text (MSS R and F) completely omits Anima's disendowment passage, and qualifies Clergie's speech with an extra passage about monks (B x 297-308). The C-text has the extra lines, but moves Clergie's speech out of the context of the 'scholastic disputation' to the more obvious and prominent location of Resoun's sermon. King, 'Robert Crowley's Editions', neglected the medieval split in the B-text tradition when he related the omission of B x 297-308 in Crowley's editions to Crowley's reformist aims, seeing it as his most sweeping change to the text itself, and as part of his misrepresentation of the poem: 'what was originally a call for monastic reform

has been transformed into a destructive attack on the very principle of monasticism' (p. 348, and cf. King, *Reformation Literature*, p. 331) whereas the most likely explanation for the omission is that Crowley was following a beta tradition B-text MS (cf. Thorne and Uhart, 'Robert Crowley's *Piers Plowman*', p. 252). Nevertheless it is of course undeniable that Crowley's understanding of the poem must be seen in relation to his activities as a Protestant printer.

- 133 Bod. Lib. Laud Misc. 581 f. 41^v beside B x 322ff, 331 and f. 42^r beside B x 334.
- 134 CUL Ll 4 14 f. 46^v beside B x 311, 322.
- 135 C v 168 (B x 322), 'Ac per shal come a kyng and confesse 3ow alle': Bod. Lib. Digby 171 f. 16^v, 'prophece'; London Univ. Lib. S.L.v.17 f. 22^r, 'prophecie'; CUL Dd 3 13 f. 21^r, 'prophece' and a *nota*; TCD 212 f. 20^r, 'prophecie'.
C v 178 (B x 334), 'Ac ar pat kyng come, as cronicles me tolde': Bod. Lib. Douce 104 f. 23^v, 'cronecle'; Bod. Lib. Digby 171 f. 17^r, 'prophece'; London Univ. Lib. S.L.v.17 f. 22^r, 'prophecie'; CUL Ff 5 35 f. 70^v, *nota*; TCD 212 f. 20^r, 'prophecie'. King, *Reformation Literature*, neglected the traditions of marginalia in the poem's MSS when commenting on that in Crowley's editions (pp. 332–8 and cf. p. ix).
- 136 C v 172a (B x 327a) '*Hii in curribus et hii in equis; ipsi obligati sunt et ceciderunt*': Bod. Lib. Laud. Misc. 656 f. 39^v, 'prophecie'; Huntington Lib. MS HM 137, 'Prophecie' (no folio numbers visible on microfilm).
C v 177a (B x 333a) '*Contriuit dominus baculum impiorum, virgam dominancium, plaga insanabili*': Bod. Lib. Laud Misc. 656 f. 39^v, 'prophecie'; CUL Dd 3 13 f. 21^r has here 'propheta'.
- 137 C v 165 (B x 319); Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 f. 22^v; presumably the note refers to the passage below. The same note 'prophecia Petri' also appears in this MS beside Consience's apocalyptic passage at C III 477 (f. 17^r).
- 138 C xvii 213 (B xv 550), 'Resoun and rihtfol doem tho religious dampnede': London Univ. Lib. S.L.v.17 f. 73^r, 'Prophecie'; Bod. Lib. Digby 102 f. 67^r, *nota*.
C xvii 214 (B xv 551), 'Riht so, 3e clerkes, 3oure coueytise, ar come auht longe': BL Cott. Vesp. B xvii f. 70^v, 'prophecia'; TCD 212, 'prophecie'.
C xvii 215 (B xv 552), 'Shal dampne *dos ecclesie* and depose 3ow for 3oure pruyde': Huntington Lib. MS HM 137, 'prophecie'.
C xvii 215a (B xv 552a), '*Deposuit potentes de sede*': BL Harley 2376 f. 89^v, 'prophecie'.
The notes in later hands beside C xvii 208–9 (B xv 546–7) are in Bod. Lib. Digby 102 f. 67^r and CUL Ll 4 14 f. 78^r respectively.
- 139 Oriel 79 f. 67^r beside B xv 551.
- 140 Oriel 79 f. 84 [88]^r beside B xx 54–61; cf. Jerome, *Commentariorum in Daniele*, col. 579.
- 141 The account of this tradition which follows is based on Lerner, 'Refreshment of the Saints', pp. 97–144; for discussions of Lerner's thesis in this article see Reeves, 'Originality and Influence', and Emerson, *Antichrist*, pp. 101–7.
- 142 Lerner, 'Refreshment of the Saints', pp. 101–3.
- 143 For early developments in the tradition see Lerner, 'Refreshment of the Saints', pp. 103–7; for twelfth- and thirteenth-century examples see pp. 109–27, and for late medieval texts, p. 133 n. 114.
- 144 Lerner, 'Refreshment of the Saints', pp. 109–18.
- 145 Lerner, 'Refreshment of the Saints', pp. 125–7 and cf. Emerson, *Antichrist*, pp. 101–7. Lerner suggested that an attack on Joachimist chronology is implied, though not stated, in William of St Amour's *De Periculis* ('Refreshment of the Saints', pp. 124–5). Emerson, *Antichrist*, pp. 101–7 emphasised that although the forty-five day period may have acquired millenarian associations, it should

- not be confused with Joachim's third *status* which is a millennial age. On the authorship of *De Antichristo*, Lerner took the view that the tract was written by William when he was in exile, for Oresme (or 'Oresma'), to whom it was later attributed, is an anagram of 'S. Amore' (pp. 125–6 n. 93). Dufeil, however, while noting the possible anagram, favoured attribution to William's disciple Nicholas Oresme (*Guillaume de Saint-Amour*, pp. 329–31, and p. 349 n. 311).
- 146 See Lerner, 'Refreshment of the Saints', pp. 128–33. Lerner cited a late thirteenth-century Antichrist tract by the Dominican James of Benevento as a possible example of influence (p. 128).
- 147 See Lerner, 'Refreshment of the Saints', p. 128. Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour*, p. 348 n. 304, lists only four extant MSS of the *De Antichristo*, now in libraries in Paris and Rome. Adams, 'Need', pp. 283ff, argued that the sequence preceding the appearance of Antichrist in *Piers Plowman* is a dramatisation of Gregory's commentary on Job 41:13, which is exploited in the *De Antichristo*, but gave no evidence for the knowledge or influence of this latter work in fourteenth-century England.
- 148 The drama of B xx does not seem to give any indication of what precisely is expected to follow the appearance of Antichrist. Adams, 'Need', pp. 293–300, deduced from B xix and xx, presumably on the basis of the possible link with the *De Antichristo*, that the poet believed that he lived in the final age of Antichrist. On the basis of his studies of Antichrist traditions, Emmerson, *Antichrist*, pp. 200–3, concluded that *Piers Plowman* is in the tradition of conservative exegesis here, and not that of the Joachimist expectation of *renovatio mundi*. Therefore the *Piers Plowman* Antichrist comes at the climax of church history and precedes not a new age, or *status*, but the last judgement; cf. Adams, 'Some Versions of Apocalypse', pp. 199–200. The Oriel 79 annotator seems also to have followed this tradition.
- 149 B xix 183–90, 428–50.
- 150 B xix 256–73a.

5 Antireligious traditions and a new satire in the C-text

- 1 *Roman de la Rose*, line 11028.
- 2 *Roman de la Rose*, lines 11687–8. Satirical use of Matt. 7:15 was of course widespread; twelfth-century antimonastic examples are Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, pp. 86–8, and Bolotin, *De Falsis Heremitis*, lines 10–12 (for this poem see below, pp. 128–9). In the thirteenth century the text was turned against friars, for example William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, p. 28. For fourteenth- and fifteenth-century antifraternal examples see Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 211–12.
- 3 *Roman de la Rose*, line 11493; *Romaunt of the Rose*, line 6795.
- 4 William of St Amour, *Collectiones*, p. 300. For the tradition and its sources see Fleming, *Roman de la Rose*, pp. 24–7. The relationship between Faus Semblant and Renart was discussed by Fenley, 'Faus-Semblant'. For the Renart narratives and iconographic traditions in which Renart appears disguised in a clerical habit see Flinn, *Le Roman de Renart*, pp. 191, 208, 331–41. Before Caxton's translation *Reynard the Fox* there were only two Renart narratives in English: *The Fox and the Wolf* and Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale* (Flinn, *Le Roman de Renart*, pp. 672–88). The former has some anticlerical elements, the latter seemingly none, although Dahlberg, 'Chaucer's Cock and Fox', argued that it contains allusions to the secular-mendicant debate.

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- 5 Bod. Lib. MS Digby 145 f. 123^v.
- 6 B xv 116, '[wol]ueliche', is spelt 'wlueliche' in R; most of the other B-text MSS have 'vnloueliche'.
- 7 Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 2, p. 541; Hudson, *English Wycliffite Writings*, p. 6.
- 8 Cf. Tuck, 'Carthusian Monks'.
- 9 Wyclif, *De Civili Dominio*, Book 1, vol. 1, pp. 118–25; Book 3, vol. 3, pp. 13–21, 77–8.
- 10 Eric Doyle, 'John Wyclif's *De Religione*'.
- 11 Catto, D.Phil. thesis 1969, p. 194, noted that Woodford's untraditional defence of his order was an abandonment of its claims to superiority and a position in defence of private religions.
- 12 For Wycliffite usage and examples (such as 'new sects', and 'new orders'), see Hudson, 'Lollard Sect Vocabulary?', p. 21. A definition quoted here from a Wycliffite sermon confirms that this was an antireligious (not just antifraternall) usage:

I calle alle po *newe sectis*, be pei neuere so old in tyme, pat ben brouzt into pe chirche and not expresli foundid of Crist ...

Omission of the phrase in some C-text MSS may be linked with the way its meaning had thus become 'loaded' (C xvii 108 and Apparatus; Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, C xviii 108).
- 13 William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, p. 28.
- 14 William of St Amour, *Collectiones*, pp. 129–30.
- 15 The grovague tradition of satire has sometimes been noted as an element in the satire of *Piers Plowman*, and has sometimes been noticed in connection with satirical and polemical texts associated with the secular-mendicant controversy. In neither case has its use been examined in detail, nor has there been any attempt to bring the two areas together, or to examine the development and changing meanings of the tradition. See for example Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 24–5, 82, 185 n. 38; Fleming, 'Summoner's Tale', pp. 699–700; Gradon, 'Langland', pp. 196, 204; Szittyá, 'Antifraternall Tradition', pp. 312–13.
- 16 Benedict of Aniane, *Concordia Regularum*, chapter 3: 'De Generibus Monachorum', cols. 729–54.
- 17 Jerome, Epistle 22, pp. 196–201.
- 18 Cassian, 'De Tribus Generibus Monachorum', pp. 509–17.
- 19 Benedict, *Rule*, vol. 1, pp. 436–41. Benedict's Rule seems to have been written in Italy in the middle of the sixth century (Benedict, *Rule*, vol. 1, p. 308). See also *Master's Rule*, vol. 1, pp. 328–50. This work seems to have been written near Rome in the first quarter of the sixth century (*Master's Rule*, vol. 1, pp. 224, 233). For the sources of the classification of monks see Vogüé, 'Le "De Generibus Monachorum"', and his 'Scholies sur la Règle du Maître', p. 265.
- 20 There has been much discussion over which of these two Rules is the earlier (see *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 'Regula Magistri', p. 1168); Vogüé argued that the classification of monks in Benedict's Rule represents an abbreviation of that in the Master's Rule ('Le "De Generibus Monachorum"').
- 21 Quoted in Benedict of Aniane, *Concordia Regularum*, cols. 745–50.
- 22 Jerome, Epistle 22, p. 197; Cassian, 'De Tribus Generibus Monachorum', pp. 513–16; *Master's Rule*, vol. 1, p. 330; Benedict, *Rule*, vol. 1, p. 438.
- 23 Augustine, *De Opere Monachorum*, col. 575.
- 24 Benedict of Aniane, *Concordia Regularum*, col. 748.
- 25 Cassian, 'De Tribus Generibus Monachorum', pp. 513–16.
- 26 *Master's Rule*, vol. 1, pp. 332–47. For the sources of the genus see Vogüé 'Scholies

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- sur la Règle du Maître', p. 265, and *Master's Rule*, ed. Vogüé, *La Règle du Maître*, vol. 1, pp. 332–3 nn. 13–14.
- 27 *Master's Rule*, vol. 1, p. 338.
- 28 C ix 213–18; for a discussion of the word 'loller' see below, pp. 149–57.
- 29 Augustine, *De Opere Monachorum*, col. 568.
- 30 C ix 246–54.
- 31 Szittyá, 'Antifraternal Tradition', p. 312; Fleming, 'Summoner's Tale', pp. 699–700.
- 32 For the tradition of satire against the new orders see R. M. Thomson, 'Berengar of Poitiers', pp. 96–8, David Knowles, *Monastic Order*, pp. 662–78, and Leclercq, 'Payen Bolotin', pp. 66–76; and for an account of the conflicts over monastic revenues see Constable, *Monastic Tithes*, pp. 136–97.
- 33 Longchamps's *Speculum Stultorum* has been dated 1179–80 (Mozley and Raymo ed., p. 2).
- 34 Leclercq, 'Payen Bolotin'.
- 35 Bolotin, *De Falsis Heremitis*, lines 273ff.
- 36 Ivo of Chartres, Epistle 192, cols. 201–2.
- 37 Szittyá, 'Antifraternal Tradition', p. 312, and *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 227–30.
- 38 Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, p. 104.
- 39 William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, p. 47; *Collectiones*, pp. 213–301 (2nd Distinction). The classification of monks in Benedict's Rule was quoted at the end of this (p. 301). Cf. Augustine, *De Opere Monachorum*, col. 568. For the monastic precedent see Dawson, 'William of Saint-Amour', p. 230 and n. 12.
- 40 William of St Amour, *Collectiones*, p. 490, signs 44–6.
- 41 Pecham, *Tractatus Pauperis*, p. 66; Aquinas, *Contra Impugnantes*, p. A130.
- 42 *Roman de la Rose*, lines 12014–51. For William's defence see McDonnell, *Beguines*, pp. 456–64; Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour*, pp. 62 n. 26, 201, 289, and see below, p. 162. For some other satirists who similarly yoked the friars with the extraregulars see McDonnell, *Beguines*, pp. 143, 442–53.
- 43 MS Bodley 144 f. 103^r.
- 44 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, pp. 60–1.
- 45 MS Bodley 240, p. 850.
- 46 *Upland's Rejoinder*, lines 261–3.
- 47 Vatican Lib. MS Reg. Lat. 127 ff. 170^r–173^v; see Pantin, 'Some Medieval English Treatises', pp. 190–1.
- 48 Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 103, p. 291. An account of the four genera, based on Benedict's Rule, follows on p. 301.
- 49 Bonaventure, 'De Paupertate quoad Mendicitatem', pp. 140–1.
- 50 Maidstone, *Protectorium Pauperis*, pp. 137–8.
- 51 Jordan of Saxony, *Vitasfratrum*, pp. 13–15, 252.
- 52 Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, p. 332. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, p. 381, proposed the convention of using 'beguine' for the female extraregulars of the north, and 'Beguin' for those associated with the Spiritual Franciscans of the south.
- 53 Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, pp. 331–4; McDonnell, *Beguines*, pp. 524–69. John XXII issued *Sancta Romana* in 1317 against the Beguins, then in 1318 with *Racio Recta* perpetuated the distinction made by Clement V between good and bad beguines in *Cum de quibusdam mulieribus* of 1311.
- 54 McDonnell, *Beguines*, p. 248; Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, pp. 320, 352.
- 55 McDonnell, *Beguines*, pp. 524–69; Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, pp. 315–47.
- 56 Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, p. 320; McDonnell, *Beguines*, pp. 143–6, 262, 271.

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- 57 Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, pp. 340-6; McDonnell, *Beguines*, p. 569.
- 58 Walsh, 'Hardeby' (1971), p. 34.
- 59 Cf. Benedict, *Rule*, vol. 1, p. 438:
 Qvi bini avt terni avt certe singvli sine pastore, non dominicis sed svis inclvsi
 ovilibvs, pro lege eis desideriorvm volvntas, cvm qvldqv d pvtaverint vel
 elegerint, hoc dicvnt sanctvm, et qv d nolverint, hoc pvtant non licere.
 Cf. also *Master's Rule*, vol. 1, p. 330.
- 60 Cf. Luke 9:3; Luke 10:4; Luke 22:35.
- 61 C IX 98, 120, 154.
- 62 Bonaventure, 'De Paupertate quoad Mendicitatem', p. 136.
- 63 For discussion of both traditions see Dawson, 'Richard FitzRalph', pp. 317-20 and Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, pp. 63-7.
- 64 Other examples of the bag-beggar theme are *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*: 'Bagges and beggyng he [Christ] bad his folk leuen' (line 600); *Sedens Super Flumina*, lines 133-4: 'Fratres isti pauperes solebant mendicare Per vicos saculo, non ingresso lare'; the *Summoner's Tale*, CT D 1737; and the opinion attributed by Knighton to an unnamed Wycliffite: 'praedicatores sacculos portantes sunt falsi praedicatores' (Knighton, *Chronicon*, vol. 2, p. 175; the Wycliffite may have been Philip Repingdon; see Hudson, 'Lollardy', p. 271).
- 65 Cf. Chaucer's Clerk who 'bisily gan for the soules preye Of hem that yaf hym wherwith to scoleye' (CT A 301-2).
- 66 See Donaldson, *Piers Plowman*, p. 218.
- 67 Quoted by William of St Amour, *Collectiones*, p. 246; cf. Augustine, *De Opere Monachorum*, cols. 564-5. Cf. also Bonaventure, 'Utrum Pauperes Validi', pp. 157-9; Barthelemy, *Defensorium*, pp. 160-64; Richard Maidstone, *Protectorium Pauperis*, p. 138, and Jordan of Saxony, *Vitasfratrum*, p. 254.
- 68 Wright, *The Vision and Creed of Piers Ploughman*, vol. 2, p. 513 n. 2473. For the modern critical tradition see for example Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 25, 70-1; Burrow, *Medieval Writers*, pp. 45-6; Donaldson, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 208-24.
- 69 Mann, 'Satiric Subject'.
- 70 For the Archpoet's Confession see Mann, 'Satiric Subject'.
- 71 CT D 865-81, A 209, D 1265, 1294, 1711; cf. Williams, "'Limitour'".
- 72 Williams, "'Limitour'", p. 463.
- 73 The account which follows is based on Williams, "'Limitour'".
- 74 For examples of licences under *Super Cathedram* see Little, 'Licence'.
- 75 Williams, "'Limitour'".
- 76 CT D 2216-19.
- 77 *Jack Upland*, p. 62; cf. *Friar Daw's Reply* lines 477-80; *Upland's Rejoinder*, lines 233-5.
- 78 Kellogg and Haselmayer, 'Pardoner'.
- 79 Kellogg and Haselmayer, 'Pardoner', pp. 253-62 and n. 47.
- 80 Hill, "'A Chaunterie for Soules'", p. 254.
- 81 Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantries*, pp. 191-3; Hill, "'A Chaunterie for Soules'", p. 245; Donaldson, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 208-24; Wilkins, *Concilia*, vol. 3, p. 50.
- 82 Mann, *Chaucer*, p. 278 n. 22, noted the similarity and gave examples.
- 83 Williams, 'Relations', pp. 56-61; Williams noticed that Grandisson's language in his Register under 1359 'significantly parallels that of FitzRalph, and of William of St. Amour' (p. 57).
- 84 *Upland's Rejoinder*, lines 230-5; cf. *Friar Daw's Reply*, lines 477-82, and Williams, "'Limitour'", p. 478 n. 37.
- 85 CT C 439-47.
- 86 Bod. Lib. MS Digby 113 f. 48^v.

- 87 MS Bodley 859 f. 277^v:
Scribitur ... quomodo Dominus ordinans pro sacerdotibus et Leuitis quod uiuerent de decimis oblationibus primiciis primogenitis sanctificatis et huiusmodi quibuscumque, deinde dixit ad Aaron: 'In terra filiorum Israel nihil possidebitis, nec habebitis partem inter eos. Ego pars et hereditas tua in medio filiorum Israel' [Num. 18] ... ad idem Deut. 18 ...
Cf. Thompson, Ph.D. thesis 1936, vol. 2.
- 88 William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, p. 26; FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, pp. 66, 85; Barthelemy, *Defensorium*, p. 151; Uthred of Boldon, *quaestio* BN MS Lat 3183 f. 168^r.
- 89 Oriel 79 f. 46^r beside B xi 283; Huntington Lib. HM 143 f. 58^v beside C xiii 99. Swanson, 'Langland and the Priest's Title', noted that editors have misinterpreted 'title' as 'title (name) of priest'.
- 90 CT A 507–10.
- 91 Courtenay, 'Effect of the Black Death', p. 713; Putnam, 'Maximum Wage-Laws for Priests', pp. 12–13.
- 92 Putnam, 'Maximum Wage-Laws for Priests', and see also her *Enforcement*.
- 93 Wilkins, *Concilia*, vol. 3, pp. 1–2.
- 94 Putnam, 'Maximum Wage-Laws for Priests', p. 22.
- 95 Wilkins, *Concilia*, vol. 3, p. 50.
- 96 Putnam, 'Maximum Wage-Laws for Priests', p. 23; for the phenomenon of unbeneficed clerics in cities see McHardy, 'Ecclesiastics and Economics', p. 132.
- 97 RP 50 Edw. III, vol. 2, p. 368; cf. Putnam, 'Maximum Wage-Laws for Priests', p. 29.
- 98 Putnam, 'Maximum Wage-Laws for Priests', pp. 27–8.
- 99 Cf. B xii 189ff.
- 100 Powicke and Cheney, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 1257–8.
- 101 BN MS Lat 3183 f. 165^v.
- 102 CT A 256. In the *Summoner's Tale* Friar John's exemplary promise to share Thomas's gift equally with his brethren has comic consequences.
- 103 *Friar Daw's Reply*, lines 673–97.
- 104 Robbins, *Historical Poems*, pp. 157–62 (*The Orders of Cain*), lines 145–56.
- 105 *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*, line 414; *Jack Upland*, pp. 65–6 and cf. C iii 53–4.
- 106 MS Bodley 240, p. 849.
- 107 For the cognates and meanings of Middle Dutch 'lullen', 'lollen' see *Nederlands Etymologisch Woordenboek*. The English use of 'lollard' and its relation with 'loller' will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.
- 108 *Decretum Magistri Gratiani*, cols. 297–304, and cf. Tierney, 'Decretists', p. 363.
- 109 Donaldson, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 146–7; Mann, *Chaucer*, pp. 44–5.
- 110 Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour*, p. 323; Dufournet, 'Rutebeuf', p. 153 – this article surveys Rutebeuf's antimendicant satire. For a brief commentary on Rutebeuf see Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 185–6.
- 111 CT A 235–7; see commentary in Mann, *Chaucer*, pp. 44–5.
- 112 Little, 'Thomas Docking', p. 108.
- 113 *Jack Upland*, p. 64. For FitzRalph's prohibition see Walsh, *Richard FitzRalph*, p. 320.
- 114 Bloomfield, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 151–2, developing Donaldson's work on the minstrel theme, came to a rather different conclusion in accordance with his thesis that the poem was pro-monastic. He proposed that the 'good minstrels' represented monastic poverty, in contrast with the friars, as an image of 'the man who sensibly throws himself on God'.
- 115 For the textual evidence, its interpretation and references to previous studies of

- these manuscripts, see Scase, 'Two *Piers Plowman* C-text Interpolations: Evidence for a Second Textual Tradition'.
- 116 For the date of the Ilchester MS see Doyle and Parkes, 'Production', p. 195.
- 117 See Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, vol. 2, C vi 2n, pp. 60-1; Workman, *John Wyclif*, vol. 1, Appendix A.
- 118 C-text examples of 'loller' are: C v 2, 4, 31; VIII 74, 287; IX 101, 103, 107, 137 (variant), 140, 158, 159, 192, 194 (variant), 213, 240. There is one B-text example at B xv 213; it does not appear in the C-text. The second textual tradition of the classification of beggars is different, and there are in addition many variant readings (see below).
- 119 For discussion of continental confusion over 'Lollard' and 'lullard' see Kurze, 'Die Festländischen Lollarden', and for 'beguine' see Leff, *Heresy*, vol. 1, pp. 331-4.
- 120 For 'gyrovagus' and other terms for false hermits see *Master's Rule*, vol. 1, pp. 332-3 n. 14; Vogüé, 'Le "De Generibus Monachorum"', p. 21.
- 121 Monk of Bury's Treatise, Vatican Lib. MS Reg. Lat. 127 f. 173^v:
... possunt proprie uocari 'monachi mundmenses', uel 'nulli locenses' [?], qui uere religionis stabilitate relictā, curiosis cordibus suis uagis circuicionibus satisfaciunt, et semper ubique propriis uoluptatibus et gule illecebris seruientes, miseranda uagacione per prouincias discurrendo uenalem circumferentes ypocrisim uitam instabilem, sub habitu monachorum enutriunt!
- 122 Cassian, 'De Tribus Generibus Monachorum', p. 513:
... istud Sarabaitarum genus, qui ab eo, quod semet ipsos a coenobitorum congregationibus sequestrarent ac singillatim suas curarent necessitates, Aegyptiae linguae proprietate Sarabaitae nuncupati sunt.
- 123 The meaning of 'monachus' according to Jerome was included in *Decretum Magistri Gratiani* II c.16 q.1 c4-5 (col. 762). For 'coenobite' see *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 311.
- 124 London Univ. Lib. MS S.L.v.88 (Ilchester) f. 3^v. Here Huntington Lib. MS HM 114 f. 41^r has 'Right so trewly such manere of heremytes'.
- 125 MS Bodley 240, p. 850.
- 126 Clanvowe, *The Two Ways*, lines 503-13.
- 127 The noun 'lurdicus' has not yet found its way into the dictionaries. For the verb see *Novum Glossarium Mediae Latinitatis*, 'lordico', and Du Cange, *Glossarium*, where it is glossed 'marcher le dos courbé', and 'Dorso incurvato incedere', respectively. Cf. also 'lurdus', glossed 'lemphalt' in *The Corpus Glossary* (ed. Lindsay, p. 108), an eighth-century Latin-English glossary.
- 128 *Master's Rule*, vol. 1, pp. 340, 344.
- 129 *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, pp. 311-12. See also Aston, 'Lollardy and Sedition', p. 1 n. 1.
- 130 Pantin, *English Church*, p. 171, proposed that Uthred of Boldon used 'garruli' for the Wycliffites, as a Latin translation of 'lollards', but this seems less probable, for the word 'lollard' was used against Wycliffites both in Latin and English.
- 131 *Mum and the Sothsegger*, lines 415-22. The link with *Piers Plowman* was proposed by Lawton, 'Lollardy'. The editors Day and Steele proposed for line 417 the interpretation 'friars first gave Lollards their names' (pp. 112-13), but the emendation 'names' and this interpretation have been convincingly challenged; see Lawton, 'Lollardy', p. 790. Lawton dated the fragment between 1402 and 1413 (p. 791).
- 132 CUL li 6 26 ff. 59^v-61^v. For this manuscript and the tract see Hudson, *English Wycliffite Writings*, pp. 189-90 and Hudson, 'John Purvey', pp. 376-7. For

- another example of a Wycliffite pun on 'loll' see *Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*, lines 528-32; here the friars 'lollede' Wyclif 'wip heretykes werkes'.
- 133 At C ix 101 the word 'loller' occurs only in Huntington Lib. HM 143 and BL Harley 2376; all other MSS have the word 'lorel'. 'Lorel' also occurs in Bod. Lib. Douce 104 at C viii 74; Bod. Lib. Laud Misc. 656 at C ix 101, 103; Huntington Lib. MS HM 143 at C ix 137.
- 134 At C ix 107 the reading 'lorels' occurs in BL MS Roy. 18 B xvii; BL Addit. 34779 has 'sismatik' instead of 'lunatyk'. At C ix 137 the reading 'lorel' occurs in Bod. Lib. Douce 104, Bod. Lib. Digby 102, Huntington Lib. HM 143, London Univ. Lib. S.L.v.88 (Ilchester) (in passus ix; the Prologue is different, reflecting a difference in the second textual tradition, see below p. 156). Another special case is BL Cott. Vesp. B xvi; see the following note.
- 135 In BL Cott. Vesp. B xvi the word 'lorel' occurs at C v 2, 4, 31; viii 74, 287; ix 101, 103, 107, 137, 140, 158, 159, 192, 213, 240. The peculiarity of the variants in this MS was noted by Gradon, 'Langland', p. 195.
- 136 In BL MS Roy. 18 B xvii the word 'lorel' occurs at C v 2, 4; viii 74; ix 101, 103, 107; cf. Gradon, 'Langland', p. 195 n. 6 (for '75' here read '74').
- 137 The *Piers Plowman* in BL Cott. Vesp. B xvi has been dated c.1400 (Middleton, 'Audience and Public', p. 107). For some of the other items see Robbins, *Historical Poems*, pp. 152-7, 187-9, 194-6, and Skeat, EETS, o.s. 54, p. xxxix.
- 138 Cf. Gradon, 'Langland', p. 195 and n. 6 (but BL Harley 2376 also mentioned here as an example reads 'loller' throughout). In Bod. Lib. Douce 104 the 'lollard' (dental) spelling occurs at C v 2, 4, 31; viii 287; ix 103, 140, 213, 240 (here 'lollartes'). BL Addit. 34779, and CUL Ff 5 35 have 'lollard' at C v 4.
- 139 The Ilchester reading at C ix 137 is without doubt 'leedes', (recorded also by Skeat, EETS, o.s. 54, p. xxxv). Pearsall in 'The "Ilchester" Manuscript' (using a photographic copy, p. 181 n. 2) rejected Skeat's reading in favour of 'lordes' or perhaps 'loedes' (p. 187 n. 28). But 'lordes' in this hand is quite distinct (available for comparison above); the combination 'oe' is more difficult to distinguish from 'ee', but is distinct when compared with that in 'soeffr.' above. The annotation occurs on f. 2^r beside the equivalent of C ix 105.
- 140 'Lorel' occurs in Bod. Lib. Douce 104, BL Cott. Vesp. B xvi, and BL Roy. 18 B xvii. Some manuscripts limit the ambiguity by inserting 'for' before 'lele men': 'That lollers and loseles for leel men halden' (Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, C ix 74) - Bod. Lib. Laud Misc. 656, Bod. Lib. Digby 171, BL Roy. 18 B xvii, Huntington Lib. HM 137, TCD 212, London Univ. Lib. MS S.L.v. 17, CUL Addit. 4325, CUL Dd 3 13 and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 293. BL Cott. Vesp. B xvi has 'Pat ben loreles and loseles pat lele men holden'.
- 141 Bod. Lib. Douce 104, 'Pat lorels and loselis trew men holdip'; BL Addit. 34779, 'Pat lollers and losels trewe men haldep'; BL Harley 2376, 'And lollers and loseles pat pes trewe men halden'.
- 142 For the significance of the phrase 'true men' in Lollard writings see Hudson, 'Lollard Sect Vocabulary?', pp. 16-17. In *Piers Plowman* it occurs also at B xv 488, in a passage on clerics who live on others' work, 'Wipouten trauaille pe tipe deel pat trewe men biswynken' (not in C) (cf. Gradon, 'Langland', p. 185). Chaucer's Ploughman is a 'trewe swynkere' (CT A 531). But neither of these examples is as suggestive as the variant at C viii 74.
- 143 Bod. Lib. MS Douce 104 has 'nota de beggers and bidders bep noght in pe bulle' beside C ix 61 (f. 41^r); 'nota de begers pat hath lemmonys' beside C ix 167 (f. 42^v); 'nota de hermytes pat wonnyth by pe hey wey' beside C ix 203-4 (f. 43^v). A figure presumably representing a lunatic loller is pictured beside C ix 105ff (f. 42^v); he is naked but for a rough garment over one shoulder, and has his arms

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- raised in the air; in passus v 'I had noo wyllle to do gode' appears beside C v 9 (f. 21^r) and 'nota de clerkys' beside C v 61 (f. 22^r).
- 144 Huntington Lib. HM 143 f. 20^v beside C v 7–10.
 - 145 Huntington Lib. HM 143 f. 40^v beside C ix 106; f. 41^r beside C ix 140.
 - 146 Huntington Lib. HM 143 f. 41^v beside C ix 169; f. 42^v beside C ix 246.
 - 147 CUL MS Addit. 4325 f. 33^v beside C ix 213.
 - 148 Bod. Lib. Digby 102 f. 33^r beside C ix 215. At f. 31^v this MS has the inscrutable annotation 'lollardes' in red ink beside the lunatic loller passage, C ix 105.
 - 149 For the detail see further Scase, 'Two *Piers Plowman* C-text Interpolations: Evidence for a Second Textual Tradition'.
 - 150 For the dates of these MSS see Kane, *A Version*, pp. 4–5, 6–7.
 - 151 See further Scase, 'Two *Piers Plowman* C-text Interpolations: Evidence for a Second Textual Tradition'.
 - 152 For the date see Seymour, 'Scribe of Huntington Library MS HM 114', p. 139 and Doyle, 'Manuscripts', p. 94: 'His writing and the papers used suggest the second quarter of the fifteenth century.'
 - 153 For references to previous studies see Scase, 'Two *Piers Plowman* C-text Interpolations: Evidence for a Second Textual Tradition'.

6 Clerical dominion and authority in new anticlerical literature

- 1 FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, trans. Trevisa, p. 39; cf. FitzRalph, *Defensio Curatorum*, p. 1392.
- 2 Uthred, *Contra Querelas Fratrum*, pp. 36–7.
- 3 William of St Amour, *De Periculis*, p. 20. William denied that *De Periculis* was about friars when defending his work at a synod of bishops in 1256 (Szittyá, 'Antifraternal Tradition', p. 289). The passage in *De Periculis* may have been included as a reply to his opponents; it seems to have been added to a lengthened version of the Prologue in the third redaction of the work (Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour*, p. 222).
- 4 William of St Amour, *Collectiones*, pp. 122–3.
- 5 *Le Roman de la Rose*, lines 15213–56. Faus Semblant can be found in many clerical and lay guises, see lines 11157–92.
- 6 R. M. Thomson, 'Berengar of Poitiers', pp. 102, 137–8; Berengar refers to Jerome, Epistle 52; for this and other comments on satire made by Jerome see Wiesen, *St Jerome as a Satirist*, and Peter, *Complaint and Satire*, pp. 17–20.
- 7 Map, *De Nugis Curialium*, p. 110. The possibility seems worth exploring that these medieval anticlerical satirists have adapted the pose of the classical satirist. Where the classical satirist claims merely to attack vices, not individuals, late-medieval anticlerical satirists claim not to be attacking any particular order or way of life, but the evil which may be falsely hidden under the guise of religion. For the *apologia* in classical satire see Shero, 'Satirist's *Apologia*', pp. 148–67 and Elliott, *The Power of Satire*, pp. 112–15. Medieval knowledge of classical satire was discussed by Peter, *Complaint and Satire*, pp. 14–39, and Sarno, 'Chaucer and the Satirical Tradition', pp. 41–61.
- 8 In B-text manuscripts the ambiguity of the phrase '[pat goode ben]' is reduced by the variants 'pat good men ben' and 'goode men', which look like attempts to exclude the notion of good friars; Kane and Donaldson considered this to be sophistication, see *B Version*, p. 147. Schmidt printed MSS L, R and F (B XIII 72):

And greve therwith that goode men ben – ac gramariens shul rede...

- 9 *Quis Dabit Capiti Pelagus Aquarum*, p. 318 (cf. Rigg, D.Phil. thesis 1966, vol. 1,

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- p. 342, lines 139–40 where MS 'edunt' is emended to 'ledunt', and Szittyá, *Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature*, pp. 192–3).
- 10 Crowley, *The Vision of Pierce Plowman*, second edition, sig. * iii. A different interpretation of the Reformers' reading was suggested by Middleton, 'Audience and Public', p. 119, who proposed, not a loss of a sense of rhetorical difficulty, but simply a loss of a sense of what she characterised as the poem's 'aventure' form, and of the dreamer's 'fictiveness'.
 - 11 The annotations in Huntington Lib. HM 143 (described by Russell, 'Early Responses') are exceptional. Russell did not comment on the marginalia in all the MSS, but his account of the others he did describe gives some idea of the more usual marginalia.
 - 12 There is evidence that it had been used by the seculars in Paris in the thirteenth century, for a Franciscan compilation of material from both sides records its use and the replies to it; Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour*, from BN MS Lat. 15812 f. 66, p. 382:

Dices quod est periculum in falsis fratribus. hoc dictum est non de religiosis
 sed de falsis christianis nundum religiosus.

This mid thirteenth-century pamphlet includes material by William of St Amour and Thomas Aquinas; it is described and partly printed in Dufeil, pp. 379–83. The text 2 Cor. 11:26 forms the basis of Uthred of Boldon's antifraternal satire in his *Contra Querelas Fratrum* (for the comparison with *Piers Plowman*, cf. Marcett, *Uthred de Boldon*, p. 63). Despite the loss of the pun in English, there are several examples which suggest that it was a widespread antifraternal joke. The late fourteenth-century translation of the Pauline Epistles has 'in false freris' for 'in falsis fratribus', and a Wycliffite sermon against the friars, based on 2 Cor. 11–12, has 'in perilis of fals freris' (Powell, *Pauline Epistles*, p. 128). Powell (noting this point) considered the translation as orthodox, perhaps made for personal use by a monk or secular clerk (p. lxvi); cf. Arnold, *English Works of John Wyclif*, vol. 2, p. 262. Another Lollard example is *Upland's Rejoinder*, line 329, where the text appears in Latin.
 - 13 See Norton-Smith, *William Langland*, p. 11.
 - 14 Schmidt, *Clerkly Maker*, pp. 85–7, proposed that Piers's Latinity should be understood figuratively: Piers is spiritually 'lered'. Schmidt's desire to resolve the paradox emphasises it.
 - 15 Godden, 'Plowmen and Hermits', pp. 134–5 compared this A-text ending with the Piers–Priest conflict, as examples of a conflict between work and the ascetic life.
 - 16 Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, vol. 2, pp. xxiv–xxvii gave examples of this recurring misreading.
 - 17 Schmidt, *B-Text*, xi 140n, p. 334 attributed the passage to Trajan (cf. Frank, *Piers Plowman*, p. 60 n. 1, and Gradon, 'Trajanus', p. 110); Skeat attributed it to Lewte (Skeat, *Parallel Texts*, vol. 2, C xiii 88n, p. 169); Pearsall attributed it to the Dreamer (Pearsall, *C-text*, xi 196n; cf. Donaldson, *Piers Plowman*, p. 173).
 - 18 For the beguines' clothing and objections to it see McDonnell, *Beguines*, pp. 128–9, 524, 534; and for the examples of the tradition concerning the English Lollards see Aston, "'Caim's Castles'", p. 78 n. 86. With these examples cf. *Friar Daw's Reply*, lines 351–85, where, after defending his own habit, Daw asks:

Whi pat pe lollardis weren moost greye clopis.
 I trowe to shewe pe colour pat signefiep symplenesse,
 And wipinne, seip Crist, 3e ben rauenous wolues.

The charge was turned yet again against the friars by Wyclif and his followers, who pointed out the irony of the mendicant friars' wearing russet, which signified

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- labour (*Pierce the Ploughmans Crede*, lines 719–20; cf. Gradon, 'Langland', p. 204).
- 19 For the meaning of 'lewte' see Pearsall, *C-text Pro* 149n; this is supported by examples of its association with exhortations of labourers in French satire (Mann, *Chaucer*, p. 69). For discussion of its meaning in the political contexts of the early passus of the poem see Kean, 'Love Law and *Lewte*'.
- 20 Hudson, *English Wycliffite Writings*, p. 9; Hudson, 'Contributions', pp. 445–6; Lambert, *Medieval Heresy*, pp. 232, 237–9; Wilks, '*Reformatio Regni*', pp. 119–21; Aston, '"Caim's Castles"', pp. 55–6.
- 21 This notion of non-professionalism links the lunatic lollers with the Wycliffite 'poor priests', a link sometimes denied by critics. For example, Gradon, 'Langland', pp. 196–7, considered and rejected the possibility of a link between the lunatic lollers and the notion of poor priests. Middleton, 'Audience and Public', suggested that some (unspecified) C-text revisions were designed to avoid association of the poem with 'poor preachers' (p. 121). It also helps to explain the meaning of the association of the poet with minstrels. The Dreamer is treated as a minstrel at A 1 137–8; Z 1 86–7; for the revision of the minstrelsy theme see Donaldson, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 136–55; Donaldson guessed the poet had probably been a minstrel (p. 153).
- 22 Burrow, *Medieval Writers*, p. 29.
- 23 Doyle and Parkes, 'Production' pp. 197ff.
- 24 Russell, 'Early Responses', esp. p. 275 n. 3.
- 25 The main research on readership is that by Burrow, 'Audience'. Middleton, 'Audience and Public', reviewed the evidence. Wood, 'London Owner', reported research on some new evidence which also fits the picture suggested by Burrow. Wood studied a London will of 1400 in which the testator, William Palmer, rector of the church of St Alphage, bequeathed a copy of the poem to a woman, Agnes Eggesfeld, of whom nothing more is known.
- 26 Szittyá, '"Sedens Super Flumina"', p. 34.
- 27 For the tradition see Rigg, 'William Dunbar' and Szittyá, '"Sedens Super Flumina"', p. 34.
- 28 *Jack Upland*, p. 137, line 411n.
- 29 For the tradition see Lawton, 'Lollardy', p. 787.
- 30 Mann, *Chaucer*, p. 13.
- 31 It is almost universally agreed that criticism of the poem profited from the abandonment of the literal 'multiple-authorship' approach, but it seems that this has been accompanied by a diminished perception of the rhetorical 'identity' problem (which manifests the problem of 'authority') and of the relationship of this to the 'autobiographical' detail in the poem. For recent discussions of the 'autobiographical' detail see for example Godden, 'Plowmen and Hermits', pp. 161–3; Martin, *Piers Plowman*, pp. 61–70, and Middleton, 'Public Poetry', p. 104; and cf. Middleton, 'Audience and Public', p. 122.

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Note: Entries for *Piers Plowman* manuscripts specify which version of the poem each manuscript witnesses and include *sigla* (from Kane, *A Version*; Kane and Donaldson, *B Version*; and for the C-text DiMarco, *Piers Plowman*, pp. xix–xxiii, with corrections).

ABERYSTWYTH

National Library of Wales

773 B (A-text [N]; C-text [N²])

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Library

Addit. 4325 (C-text [Q])

Dd 1 17 (B-text [C])

Dd 3 13 (C-text [G])

Ff 5 35 (C-text [F])

Ii 6 26 (English Polemic)

Ll 4 14 (B-text [C²])

Corpus Christi College

103 (Latin Polemic)

180 (Latin Polemic)

293 (C-text [S])

Newnham College

070 (B-text [Y])

Sidney Sussex College

64 (Latin Polemic)

Trinity College

B 15 17 (B-text [W])

DUBLIN

Trinity College

212 (D.4.1) (C-text [V])

213 (D.4.12) (A-text [E])

LONDON

British Library

Addit. 10574 (C-text [O]; A-text; B-text [Bm])

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Addit. 41321 (English Polemic)

Cott. Vesp. B xvi (C-text [M])

Harley 2376 (C-text [N])

Royal 18 B xvii (C-text [R])

London University Library

S.L.v.17 (C-text [A])

S.L.v.88 (C-text [I])

OXFORD

Bodleian Library

Auct. F. infra 1.2 (Latin Polemic)

Bodley 52 (Latin Polemic)

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 Eng. Poet. a.1 (A-text [V])
 e. Mus. 94 (Latin Polemic)

Laud Misc. 581 (B-text [L])
 Laud Misc. 656 (C-text [E])
 Rawl. G. 40 (Latin Polemic)
Oriel College
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PARIS

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 HM 128 (B-texts [Hm], [Hm²])
 HM 137 (C-text [P])
 HM 143 (C-text [X]; consulted in facsimile: *Piers Plowman: The Huntington*

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